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John J. Wolter

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BECKET ACADEMY, THE FIRST SEVEN YEARS
A CASE STUDY

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University of Massachusetts in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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BECKET ACADEMY, THE FIRST SEVEN YEARS

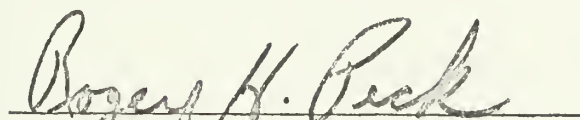
A CASE STUDY

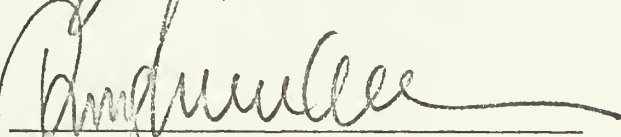
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By

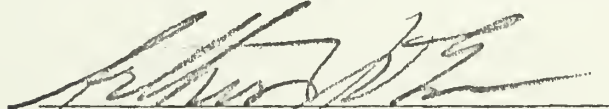
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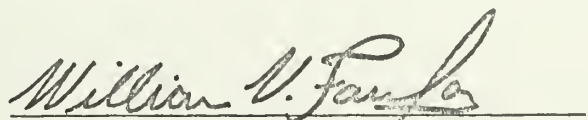
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VITA

January 22, 1937 Born - Brooklyn, New York

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1960-1962. Teacher, Social Studies and English, Albert
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C H A P T E R I

INTRODUCTION

The Crisis in Education

Scan the front pages of a major newspaper and the crises facing our society are apparent. Articles concerning pollution, law and order, unemployment, inflation, faulty health care, war and pestilence fairly cry from the pages. Government on the local, state, and national level is on the defensive, and the churches are losing members while they battle critics from within and outside their ranks.

Despite the obvious consequences of yesterday's actions, people are still indifferent to the solution of today's problems. Inter-group tensions are common; communication is ineffective and distorted. Juvenile delinquency, drugs, divorce, mental illness, and sterility in education hack at the foundations of our society in an attempt to corrupt our youth. The rate of school failure and school drop-outs is scandalous. Yet for society to solve its problems, it must begin somewhere, and the logical point of embarkment is education. It is the critical state of education in this country today which scandalizes even the most insensitive because turmoil in educational areas perpetuates itself in society.

Education is the "life's blood" of a future society. It nurtures new members upon which society depends for survival. Thus, if the crisis in education today is forthrightly met, the entire social structure of the future will benefit. As educators, the problems in the present state of education are ours, and the solutions are our

solutions. If we can alleviate the crucial situation in education, even in a small way, our efforts will not be in vain.

This crisis is not only apparent to educators. Parents, students, and various state and private agencies are dissatisfied with traditional public and private school education, and are seeking alternatives; either changing their own local school structures, organization and programs or attempting to disassociate themselves with the past programs. If they choose disassociation, they must allow the private and public schools the freedom for innovation. This is difficult when experimenters and innovators must rely upon public funds and personnel for approval or operating income. In the case of private education, they must rely upon private wealth and approval which can be unsympathetic. Yet, it is possible to shake the shackles of tradition and begin "anew."

However, "starting anew" has many shortcomings, one of which is the lack of basic literature on founding "alternative" means and structures for the education of our youth. Despite considerable recent discussion on innovations in education, "educational pioneering" might be a lost art in a country where it has been a watchword. Because of this lack of basic literature, most attempts at founding new schools usually do not progress beyond the "idea-talking stage." The ideas that survive this stage and enter into serious planning generally are abandoned as problems arise. The schools which are afforded the dignity of a birth often fail or are radically altered early in their existence so that any semblance to the original idea is rare.

In an attempt to obtain information on founding schools, one will find a fair number of histories of schools compiled by historians of

various degrees of proficiency. Unfortunately these histories are most often written after a school has been in existence for generations so that they merely deal with the highlights of success and tragedy and are not in sufficient detail to be of substantial value to a person seeking concrete knowledge and insight into the founding of a school.

Becket Academy, a boarding school for boys in grades four through nine, established in 1964 by the present headmaster, John Jay Wolter, has been chosen for this study because it is a school which began "anew," ventured into an uncertain future and existence without a cash investment and now, after seven years, controls assets exceeding \$1,000,000. The detailed events of the early years of a successful school should provide a rather surprising chapter in the annals of the History of Non-Public Alternative Education. It will also provide an idea of the challenges, pitfalls, ironies, and practical day-to-day experiences which one should be prepared for, if one is to "found" an educational institution. A reading of some of the facts, instances and situations which the founders of Becket Academy had to cope with may cause some individuals to abandon their desires to "begin anew" or it may inspire people to establish, maintain, or support non-public alternative schools.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are:

1. To determine the major actors and incidents which have affected the development of the programs and physical and financial growth of the Academy from its founding in 1964 until June, 1971.

2. To determine the effects that these major actors, incidents, physical and financial growth and programs had upon each other.

These objectives will be achieved by reviewing factors which motivated the founding of the school, by an analysis of qualifications and qualities of the persons involved with the school, including students, faculty, staff and various public and private agencies, and by a description of the founder's beliefs and the academic, physical and moral educational curricula of the Academy. The procedures involved in the physical growth of the school campus and the financial development of the school, including sources of income and major monetary transactions, will be detailed. Additionally, analyses will be conducted on the corporate structure of Becket Academy and the processes of State Approval and private accreditation.

Definition of Terms

The following terms were defined operationally as used in this study:

1. Major actors are the students, professional staff, non-professional staff, and other individuals who significantly affected the growth of Becket Academy.

2. Program of Becket Academy refers to all the forces affecting the lives of the students, the professional and non-professional staff members, including, but not limited to, academics, social life, leisure-time activities, required work, athletics, physical education, morals, manners, health, and discipline. It is the "milieu" in which the residents and workers at Becket Academy exist.

3. Independent, non-public, alternative school is a school which is not directly supported through taxpayers' funds, either through the local school district or the state legislature. It possesses internal and external freedom to function without the control of an absentee Board of Trustees, and it can allow its program to develop naturally without restriction other than by its own students and staff members. The school is unique in that its program is sufficiently different from accepted practices.

Assumptions of the Study

The study assumed that:

1. The respondents (students, teachers, parents, guardians, state workers, alumni, headmaster, wives, friends) would react to interviews honestly and with proper and considered reflection.
2. The founder and author would be able to recount, recall, report and organize the important incidents of the first ten years of the Academy's existence.
3. The individuals residing at or in contact with Becket Academy would recall and report important incidents and perceptions of the first seven years of the Academy.
4. The admissions records, applications and interviews would have sufficient data to provide a valid analysis of the student population.
5. The employment folders would contain adequate concrete material for a faculty study during the ten years.

6. The financial records, kept by the school's bookkeeper, accountant and Internal Revenue Service were in sufficient detail to allow analysis.

7. The Legal Records and Proceeding of the School were complete and correct.

8. The memorabilia concerning the founder's beliefs and values upon which the school and its program are based would be truly representative from the times and the occasions of which they represent.

Limitations of the Study

1. The scope of the study was limited to one institution, Becket Academy, analyzed over a period of approximately ten years, January 1961 through June 30, 1971. The concentration of the study is on the years 1964-1971.

2. The social, economic, political, religious and educational factors affecting the growth of Becket Academy may be peculiar in whole or in part to this particular decade alone.

3. The amount of recall of past events which the author was able to engender by research and concentration.

4. The cooperation received by persons interviewed and the amount of time the interviewer was able to spend with each person.

5. The rural location of Becket Academy and the fact that it is a boarding school for boys in grades four through nine.

6. The accuracy and completeness of records compiled by the school over the years, and the materials kept in the school archives.

7. The judgment of the author as to which persons and events were most significant, and his interpretation of how these individuals and events affected the Academy's posture.

Procedure of the Study

The first step in the preparation of this work was a compilation of significant pieces of information and data from the files of Becket Academy, the legal firm of Gould, Sivin, Larsen and Reardon, the accounting firm of William McCarry, and the personal papers and reports of various people associated with and influencing Becket Academy. Interviews with available personalities were also conducted. This information pertaining to the period from approximately 1961-1971 was the primary source of documentation. In particular, the applications, permanent records and files of over 470 students and employment records of the professional staff were screened and analyzed to enable the author to relate succinct and complete information. The students were studied in the following areas:

1. Enrollment analysis
2. Reason for coming to Becket Academy
3. Geographic distribution
4. Race, religion, nationality
5. Family status (whether student is adopted or the product of a divorced or otherwise broken family)
6. Number of students leaving - graduation and other reasons
7. Educational aspirations for student by parents
8. Occupation of the parents

9. Referral of students
10. Grade distribution at entrance
11. Financial support of students
12. Academic success, I.Q., Achievement Test, Iowa Tests

The employment records of the faculty were studied in the following areas:

1. Age
2. Sex
3. Education
4. Reason for seeking employment at Becket Academy
5. Type college they graduated from (sectarian or non-sectarian)
6. Duration of stay
7. Reason for remaining or leaving Becket Academy
8. Marital status
9. Race and religion
10. Certification

The results of these studies are recorded in the appendix.

In addition to the studies of the students and faculty, detailed financial statements were compiled and categorized for comparison. Other essential documents such as corporate minutes, contracts, agreements, reports of various persons, parties, and agencies (examples: Internal Revenue Service and State Welfare Department) were reviewed and where appropriate, listed in the appendix.

Study Population

The study population of this work was comprised of:

1. approximately 470 pupils who attended Becket Academy from 1964-1971;
2. the parents or guardians of these children;
3. the professional staff, their wives and families;
4. the non-professional staff at the school;
5. other individuals, bankers, consultants, clergymen and educators whose activities have greatly influenced the school;
6. various groups such as foundations, state agencies, private associations and governmental departments; and
7. the headmaster and founder of Becket Academy.

Significance of the Study

More and more educational leaders and influential individuals in our country are seeking change in educational institutions and their influence is being felt by many. The idea of change is particularly tempting to young educators who prefer not to work for existing institutions or to wait for positions to become available in schools where they can be effective.

Some educators see a hope for educational reform in the alternative plan, but these schools, financed by government and private foundations, tend to lose their innovative freedom and even their very existence because of inadequate financing or undue pressures from the government and the foundations. On the other hand, independent alternative ventures, properly conceptualized, can provide innovative programs which will benefit students who need educational help. The successes, failures, and problems of these independent ventures have not yet been recorded and

documented for evaluation by educators and researchers interested in educational pioneering.

This study, by determining the major actors and incidents which have affected the development of the program and physical growth of Becket Academy, and by analyzing the effects these programs have on the students and faculty, will provide a point of reference that is properly documented and in perspective to persons interested in non-public independent alternative education. As the existence of Becket Academy is "real," the actual course of events and their interpretation will provide a vehicle for interested parties to evaluate their own endeavors. The study should answer the following questions:

1. What type of person is most likely to be interested in and benefit from an alternative system like Becket Academy?
2. What type of background is a student most likely to have to attend successfully an alternative boarding school?
3. How does one finance, equip, build and maintain a school?
4. What are the sources of support?
5. What are the sources of students and teachers?
6. How are the processes of certification, accreditation and approval achieved?
7. What are the various corporate structures?

Lastly, this study will indicate many small incidences which will prevent innovators from making needless mistakes.

In summary, the study will be of significance for anyone interested in independent, non-public or alternate education, whether it is a casual interest or one of active participation.

Organization of the Study

In Chapter I of this study a general description of the present crisis in education is stated, along with the reasons for singling out Becket Academy as an example of how one independent educational institution has successfully met the challenge of breaking away from tradition and beginning "anew." The objectives, procedure for meeting these objectives, and the assumptions, limitations and definitions necessary for an understanding of the study have been set forth.

Chapter II presents a detailed description of Becket Academy and the major actors in the school year 1970-1971. The Academy's location, organizational and corporate structure, physical and financial resources, program, accreditation, and data on the student body and faculty are described.

Chapter III sets forth the beliefs and values of the founder of the Academy, reviews the genesis of those beliefs and values in the founder's experiences, and explains the role played by a dedicated faculty in the attainment of the school's objectives.

Chapter IV relates the background material prior to the incorporation of the school in 1964 and reviews the organization, financial transactions, evaluations and accreditation from 1964 to the spring of 1971.

Chapter V describes the physical and financial growth of the Academy from its inception in 1964 to 1971, including increases in student enrollment and faculty.

Chapter VI describes the program of the school, including academic and extra-curricular activities, and analyzes the effects that the

program, major actors, incidents, physical and financial growth had upon each other.

A summary and implications constitute Chapter VII.

C H A P T E R I I

BECKET ACADEMY 1971

In Chapter I, a brief description of the present crisis in education and the challenge to educators has been given, along with the reasons for choosing the experience of Becket Academy in meeting the challenge. The objectives, procedure for meeting these objectives, and the assumptions, limitations and definitions necessary for an understanding of this study have been set forth. Chapter II focuses on a detailed description of Becket Academy in the school year 1970-1971, showing the growth and stability that have been attained since its founding in 1964 by presenting a picture of the program, school governance, physical assets, activities of the major actors, accreditation, approval, memberships, listings, and data on the school's financial status, students and faculty.

This study deals first with the school as it existed in 1970-1971 in order to draw attention to the fact that Becket Academy is a living, functioning and successful institution, and that it achieved its present status in the short span of seven years, growing from its initial corporation value of \$1,000 to a corporation controlling assets of over \$1,000,000. In the following section is described the geographic location of the Academy and its relation and significance to the objectives of the school.

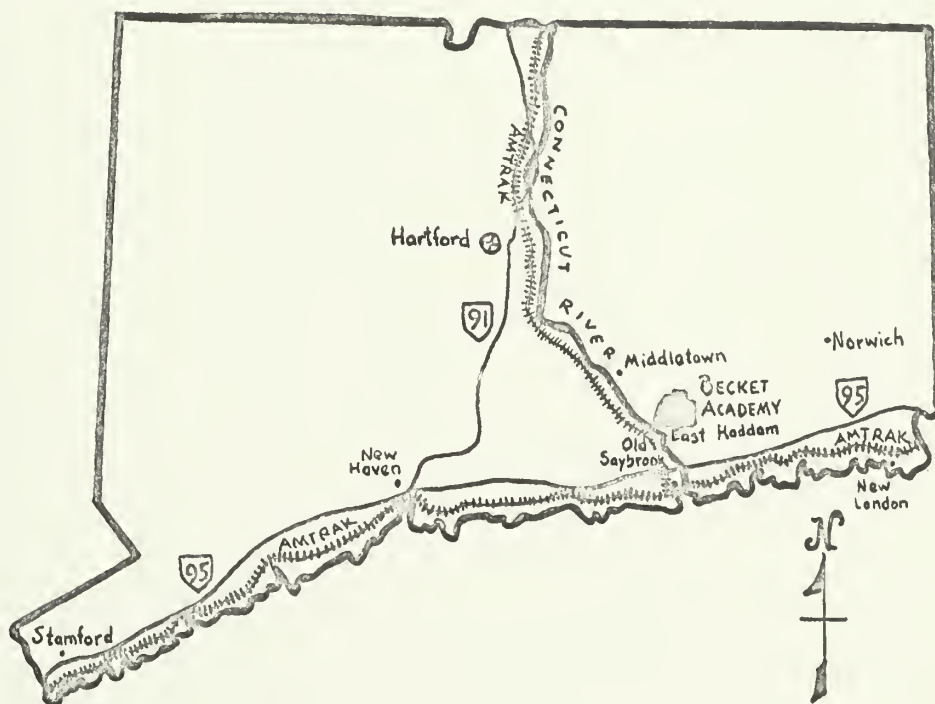
Location

In Figure 1 is presented a map showing the location of the 100-acre campus of Becket Academy in the Hadlyme section of the rural town

of East Haddam which overlooks the East Bank of the Connecticut River.

FIGURE 1

LOCATION OF BECKET ACADEMY IN EAST HADDAM, CONNECTICUT



In 19th century New England, East Haddam manufactured fishnets for the fishing fleets, and was engaged in shipbuilding and whaling. Today only a few string manufacturing companies remain. With the exception of several small machine shops, the other major source of income in the town is a resort business. In years past, because of the natural beauty of the rolling hills, lakes, streams, and the Connecticut River, resorts and summer boarding houses flourished. New Yorkers, Bostonians, and dwellers from other coastal cities travelled the Connecticut River

by steamboat to the East Haddam dock for a long weekend or a vacation in the country. With the advent of rapid transportation opening up other parts of the country, the economy of East Haddam remained static and the population hovered around 3,000. It has remained near this level with a gradual growth to 4,000 in 1957, to the present population of approximately 4,500.¹

Looking at the map of the area, in Figure 2, it would seem that East Haddam is doomed from contact with modern life forever. However, a closer analysis of the maps in Figure 1 and 2 shows that East Haddam is located roughly equal-distant between Boston, New York and Albany on an outside arc of approximately 125 miles; and equal-distant between Providence, Hartford and New Haven on an inside arc of fifty miles. A knowledgeable demographer would tell you that thirty-five million people reside within a radius of 200 miles.² Because East Haddam is the furthest point between these population centers, as shown in Figure 2, it has escaped development and exploitation. At a time when America's landscape is vanishing, it remains valuable, beautiful real estate. So valuable are the virgin forests, marshes, woodlands and fields that the Department of the Interior is planning to establish a national park of over 23,000 acres encompassing the Hadlyme section of East Haddam.³ Becket Academy is located on a sweep of hill overlooking the Connecticut

¹State of Connecticut Register and Manual (Hartford, Connecticut: Office of the Secretary of State, 1970), pp. 596-597.

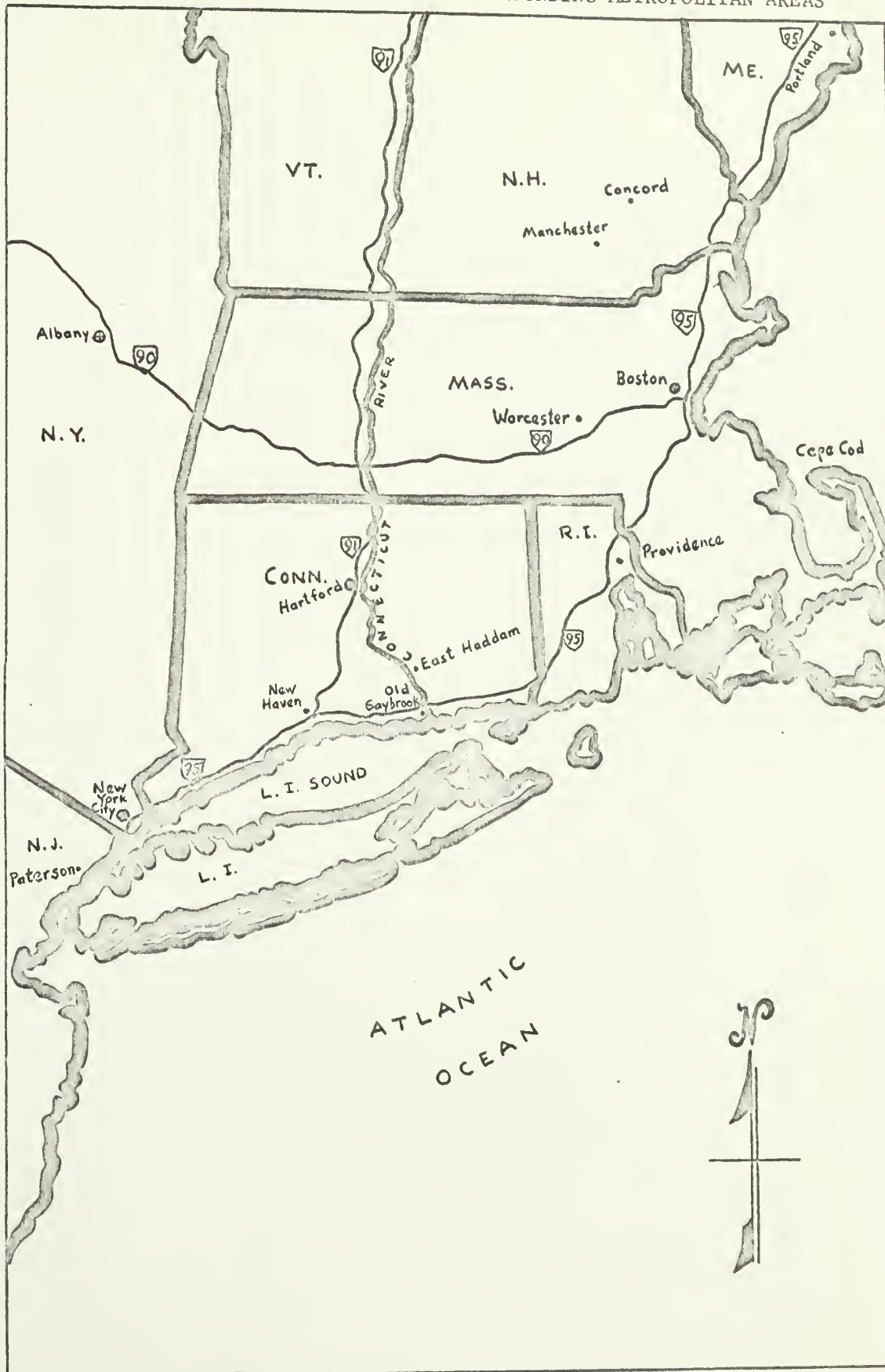
²Edward Cratts, Director, New England Heritage (Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, July 1968), p. 8.

³Ibid., p. 10.

FIGURE 2

RELATIONSHIP OF BECKET ACADEMY TO SURROUNDING METROPOLITAN AREAS

16



River, within the confines of the proposed Connecticut River Gateway National Park.⁴

It is a good place for Becket Academy to be located, for the founder and headmaster believes that rural living for boys in their early teens and younger is an ideal natural-physical environment in which to learn about life. While being assured of remaining a country boarding school, it is easily accessible via the New Haven Railroad; super-highway Route 95, east and west; and Interstate Routes 91 and 9, north and south, as illustrated in Figure 2. The school enjoys thousands of acres of public lands.

Being centrally located enables the Academy to attract many students and its rural setting helps to insulate them against the distractions of city life. Where the faculty is concerned, the school's location affords an opportunity for country living while at the same time allowing easy access to major metropolitan areas.

In the following section is provided a description of the Academy's accreditation, approval, memberships, and listings.

Accreditation, Approval, Memberships, Listings

Despite its youth, Becket Academy is fully approved and accredited. It is approved by the Connecticut State Department of Education and by the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization of the Department of Justice for the enrollment of foreign students. It is accredited by the Connecticut Association of Independent Schools, and is a member of the National Association of Independent Schools, the National Catholic

⁴Ibid., p. 35.

Educational Association, the Orton Society, the Educational Records Bureau, and Project Learn.⁵ The academy is listed and described in Private Independent Schools, The Educational Register, and is considered by Porter Sargent's Private Schools as one of New England's leading schools.⁶

School Governance

Corporate structure

Becket Academy, Inc. is incorporated not for profit under the laws of the State of Connecticut. It was incorporated with the approval of the Internal Revenue Service of the National Government and has been declared tax-exempt.⁷

Through the Board of Trustees that includes Mr. and Mrs. Wolter, three parents of former students, two headmasters, and three friends of the school, Becket Academy, Inc. owns and controls the physical and financial assets of the school.⁸ This includes all monies, goodwill,

⁵Detailed data on these organizations will appear later in the text.

⁶Private Independent Schools (Wallingford, Connecticut: Bunting & Lyon, Inc., 1970), p. 73.

Private Schools (Boston, Massachusetts: Porter-Sargent's Publication, 1970), p. 36.

Educational Register (Boston, Massachusetts: Vincent Curtis Publications, 1970), p. 188.

⁷Letter from Williams E. Williams, District Director Internal Revenue Service (Boston, Massachusetts: May 1970).

Letter from John Sullivan, Tax Commissioner (Hartford, Connecticut: July 1968).

⁸Trustees of the Academy: Bartholomew J. O'Rourke, F. Joseph O'Hara, Edmund Riccotta, parents of former Becket Academy students; John Bigelow, Langdon Rankin, Headmasters of other schools; Richard Maher, Michael Someck, friends of the school; and John J. Wolter and Joan M. Wolter.

equipment, the chapel and chaplain quarters. It does not include the other buildings and land which the Academy occupies; these are leased from Becket School, Inc., a corporation for profit under the laws of the State of Connecticut.⁹ Becket Academy, Inc. also leases two houses, one from Joan M. Wolter, the other from Joan M. Wolter and John J. Wolter.¹⁰

The entire amount of issued stock of Becket School, Inc. is owned by John J. Wolter. Besides overall responsibility for general supervision of the operation of Becket Academy, Inc., the Board of Trustees hires the headmaster to directly supervise the program and affairs of the Academy.

Although the school is incorporated as a non-sectarian institution, Mass and Sacraments are available on campus to Roman Catholics, as is a Protestant service. Religious instruction, while not mandatory, is given to the majority of the students in their own faiths.

Internal organization

In 1970, the headmaster and founder, John J. Wolter, was voted a Sabbatical leave for the school year 1970-1971. While he maintained board contact and financial responsibility for the school, the Trustees appointed Christopher Warren and Sidney I. DuPont as co-administrators

⁹Lease from Becket School, Inc. to Becket Academy, Inc. (Essex, Connecticut: Gould, Sivin, Larsen & Reardon, June 6, 1968).

¹⁰Lease from Joan M. Wolter to Becket Academy (Essex, Connecticut: Gould, Sivin, Larsen & Reardon, May 12, 1969).

Lease from John and Joan M. Wolter to Becket Academy (Essex, Connecticut: Gould, Sivin, Larsen & Reardon, May 12, 1969).

of the school in the absence of the headmaster.¹¹ Table 1 illustrates this relationship, showing that Christopher Warren was responsible for administering the office, external communications and guidance, while Sidney DuPont supervised maintenance, dining hall, student activities and academics. Mr. Warren granted responsibility for guidance to Joseph LaFrance, and discipline to Neal Rist. Mr. LaFrance additionally took responsibility, under Mr. DuPont, for athletics. Mr. Rist, working closely with Mr. LaFrance, supervised dormitory living and social activities.

Generally speaking, all members of the professional staff, while enjoying considerable freedom, were answerable directly to these four men in their respective areas. Non-professional staff members were answerable only to Mr. Warren and Mr. DuPont. Mr. Warren, in handling the daily report, facilitated internal communications. By design, all structural roles at Becket Academy are "loosely defined" to enable individuals to have maximum freedom.

Constitution

The process of community governance at Becket Academy was conducted through a constitution which operated in the milieu of a "town meeting." Control of this process was given to a counsel composed of eleven students and the headmaster who introduced matters of community concern to the town meeting. The chairman of this meeting was appointed

¹¹Becket Academy, Inc. (East Haddam, Connecticut) Minutes of the Meetings of the Board of Trustees, meeting of August 29, 1970. (Type-written.)

TABLE 1

INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF BECKET ACADEMY^a

Trustees		
	Mr. Wolter Headmaster	
	Financial Responsibility	
Office	Mr. Chris Warren	Mr. Sidney DuPont
Clerical	Office Administration	Maintenance
	Communications	Dining Hall
Nurse	Guidance-Academics	Student Activities
		Kitchen
		Maintenance
		Staffs
Psychological		
Social Worker		
	Mr. Rist	Mr. Rist &
	Discipline	Mr. LaFrance
	Guidance	Mr. LaFrance
		Social activities
		Athletics
		Dormitory
	Faculty	

^aCompiled by John Wolter

for the day only. Members of the Becket Academy community, which included all professional and non-professional staff, students, wives, and faculty children, had one vote on all matters in the "town meeting." Topics for discussion were in no way restricted and motions which were passed became school policy. The town meeting was conducted under Robert's Rules of Orders Revised, 75th Anniversary Edition.¹²

Land, Buildings and Equipment

Land

Becket Academy, Inc. leases approximately fifteen acres of land from Becket School, Inc. and has use of an additional eighty acres. Figure 3 illustrates how these fifteen acres, maintained in harmony with the natural environment, are comprised of about three acres of rough lawns, inter-dispersed by playgrounds, benches, barbecue areas, paths, orchards, and semi-cultivated gardens. The improvements on these grounds are valued at about \$20,000.¹³

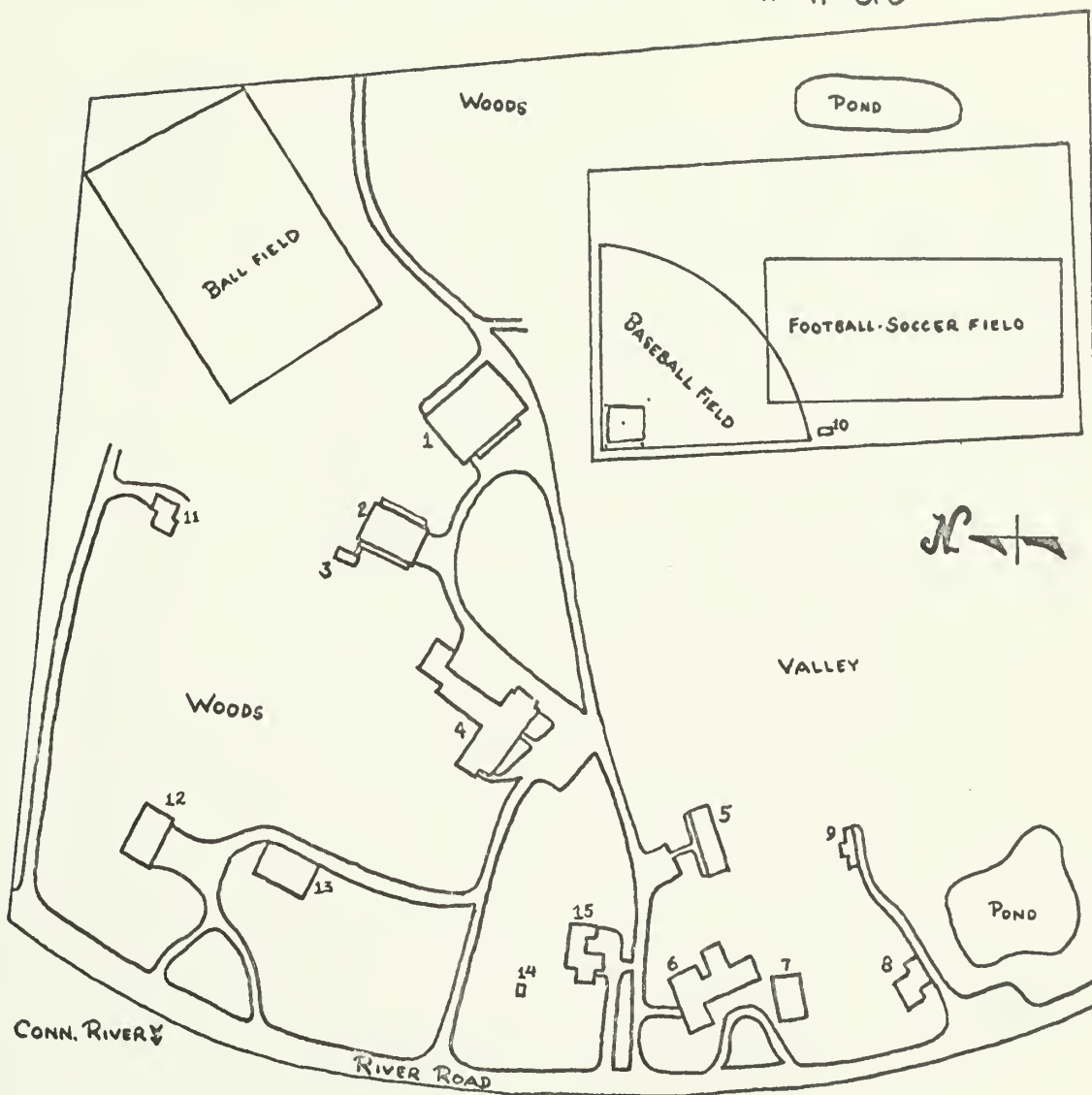
In addition to the lawns and gardens is the six-acre athletic field upon which all outdoor sports are played; a three-acre woodland meadow, fenced for a cattle herd of five Herefords; a natural hockey pond, and a fishing pond of about a half acre each. The remaining acreage is comprised of forest land or occupied by buildings and blacktop roads. The land leased by the school is valued at \$25,000.¹⁴

¹²John Kennedy, "Student Council Constitution" (East Haddam, Connecticut, Becket Academy, Inc., 1968). (Mimeographed).

¹³Edward Bogdan, "Appraisal of Becket Academy" (Middletown, Connecticut: Tynan, Bogdan Agency, April 16, 1971).

¹⁴Ibid.

BECKET ACADEMY CAMPUS



KEY

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Gymnasium-classroom complex (1967) | 9. Barn (purchased) |
| 2. Chapel (1969) | 10. Shed (1971) |
| 3. Chaplain's quarters (1970) | 11. Warren Home (1966) |
| 4. Baruch Hall (Dormitory) (1965-1969) | 12. Workshop (1968) |
| 5. Founders Hall (1964) | 13. Wolter Home (1964), addition (1967) |
| 6. Dining Hall - Thomas More Hall (purchased) | 14. Well (1966) (purchased) |
| 7. Pool (1966-building) | 15. Brian Home (1966) (purchased) |
| 8. Faculty House (purchased) | |

The Academy also has access to the Connecticut River by ownership of four acres by Becket School, Inc.

Gillette Castle State Park, owned by the State of Connecticut, is located across from the school. The students and staff also use two lakes within three miles of the school and the Long Island Sound which is about ten miles by road.

Buildings

The Chapel of the Next Martyr (1969) and chaplain's quarters (1971) are located at the geographic center of the campus. Constructed of wood, with a large wooden beam frame, the chapel seats approximately 200 persons and contains a choir loft and organ. It is used for religious services of all faiths, assemblies and town meetings. The tallest building on campus, it is valued at \$54,000. The chaplain's quarters, connected to the chapel, is valued at \$12,600.

The gymnasium and classroom building (1967) houses the school offices, gymnasium locker room, lavatories, science room, art room and nine classrooms. A stage at one end of the gym also serves as an all-purpose room. Of block and stucco construction, the building is approximately 14,000 square feet and is valued at \$255,000.

Baruch Hall (1965), the dormitory which houses the entire student body, has three floors, each with two four-room faculty apartments, large recreation room and lavatories. A wooden veneer beautifies the block construction which is about 24,000 square feet and is valued at \$278,000.

Founders Hall (1964), a block building with wooden veneer, contains the library and offices. It is two stories, 3,000 square feet, and valued at \$41,000.

The Pool Building, 2,400 square feet, also of block construction with a wooden veneer, encloses an indoor pool, sauna bath and lavatories. It is valued at \$43,500.

St. Thomas More Hall (1948) is of cement block and frame construction with a wooden veneer. Its 8,000 square feet contain the laundry room, school store, music room, two dining halls, a kitchen, storage room, nurse's apartment, and an eight-bed infirmary. It is valued at \$71,500.

The Faculty House (1810) is of wooden construction, planked, with two floors. It contains two apartments, has 2,100 square feet and is valued at \$28,500.

The Brian House (1840), also a plank house and similar in size to the Faculty House, is valued at \$31,000.

The Headmaster's House (1964-1966) is 3,800 square feet. It contains the school canteen and is valued at \$62,000.

Three maintenance buildings, with a total of 5,000 square feet, are valued collectively at \$26,900.¹⁵

All the buildings possess fire and safety equipment and were inspected by the state or local fire marshalls. The school has neither town water nor town sewage. It maintains three active drilled wells and two inactive wells. All buildings have their own septic tanks and leaching

¹⁵Ibid.

fields, with the exception of Thomas More Hall and Baruch Hall which share a common large leaching field.

Generally speaking, the buildings blend into the landscape and while built over a period of 100 years, they possess a harmony of common characteristics.

Equipment

The Academy owns all of the necessary equipment to feed, house, and educate 100 students and fifteen professional staff members. In addition to normal furnishing implements and office machinery, the school possesses ten canoes, complete winter and summer hiking and camping equipment for fifty boys; scientific equipment for environmental studies; a twelve-position language arts laboratory; a complete woodworking shop; an 8,000 volume library, subscribing to over thirty periodicals; athletic equipment for intramural and inter-scholastic competition in football, soccer, cross-country, basketball, spring and winter track, baseball; a bus, truck, two cars, and a variety of maintenance machinery. The school also has a complete range of audio-visual aids, including machines for eye examination, 16mm projectors, overhead projectors, opaque projectors, tachiscopes, sloop projectors, and sound equipment. There are various programs for these machines. The equipment is evaluated at approximately \$150,000.¹⁶ The school has received donations of original works of art which have not been appraised.

¹⁶Estimated by William McCarry, C.P.A., by an analysis of expended and non-expended equipment and property, May 5, 1971.

Objectives of the School

The program of education at Becket Academy aims to bring to the students a zest for life and to give them adequate preparation for the business of living. It seeks to produce "scholastically sound and mature boys who are able to discipline themselves to a full realization of their God-given potential."¹⁷ This phrase has been re-stated constantly since the school's founding. The school realizes that it is first and foremost a Christian school which seeks to uphold the ideas and ideals put forth by Vatican Council II.¹⁸ These ideals are directed toward bringing students, faculty and staff closer to a meaningful awareness of the manly person and being of Jesus Christ and his teachings.¹⁹ A "Code of Ethics," given to each member of the school community, outlines his responsibilities to God, to himself, to others, to the school and dormitory, and other constant responsibilities.²⁰

In a practical sense, the faculty and staff, to the best of their ability, are expected to be ethical models for the students, who, in turn, inspire the faculty and their fellow students.²¹ It is not by accident

¹⁷Becket Academy, brochure (Moodus, Connecticut: Becket Academy, Inc., 1968), p. 1.

¹⁸The essence of Vatican Council II pertained to reform within the structure and liturgy of the Roman Catholic church, an emphasis on social justice, and a kindling of an ecumenical spirit among all faiths.

¹⁹Becket Academy, brochure (Moodus, Connecticut: Becket Academy, Inc., 1970), p. 1.

²⁰Joseph LaFrance, "Becket Academy Code of Ethics" (East Haddam, Connecticut, September 1970). (Mimeographed.) [See appendix for copy of Code of Ethics.]

²¹Becket Academy, brochure, 1968, p. 1.

that The Chapel of the Next Martyr is the geographic center of the campus and the one location where the entire school community congregates to celebrate Sacred Services, discuss community problems, and commence each day with a prayer and short assembly. The school's motto is exemplified in the words "knowledge-discipline-integrity."

Knowledge

In the area of knowledge, the Academy wishes students to be able to read, write, and calculate to the best of their own ability. In other academic areas the staff trusts that students, beyond basic skills, will develop many of their own areas of interest in literature, social studies, the sciences, languages, art and music. By an approach directed toward individual needs it is hoped that the students will develop a "love of learning."

The school program offers individual and group assignments (calisthenics, sports, student government, classroom lectures and activities and study hall) which aim to encourage the students to make demands upon themselves and to cooperate with others to achieve a spirit of self-discipline. This helps the student to reach for his potential.²²

Discipline

Discipline at Becket Academy follows no definite set policy. In 1971, the Guidance Counselor and the Psychological Social Worker, who are responsible for discipline, worked together to formulate individualized solutions to "wrongdoings" of each student and faculty member.

²²Becket Academy, brochure, 1970, pp. 6-22.

The Academy knows that it: . . . must discipline students to help establish habits of self-control. To punish, meaning to give a penalty connoting retribution rather than correction, is forbidden. Correction for the purpose of overcoming faults is encouraged. No student is to be castigated, meaning punished by severe public criticism. No faculty member is to chastise a student where corporal punishment is used.²³

Periodically, however, much of the school policy was violated in spirit if not in practice--these violations usually occurring during times of stress. Although the general form of punishment was correction, a full range of punishments were employed, principally detention, work, the writing of explanatory essays on behavior, and the withdrawal of privileges.²⁴ On occasion, suspension was employed to allow the student to discuss with his parent or guardian whether he wished to remain at the school. If a student sought separation from the Academy, he was allowed to leave after consultation with all parties involved.

Integrity

By integrity, the Academy hopes the students will internalize basic human values embodied in the Ten Commandments so that their lives will bring satisfaction to themselves and to others. The Academy also values diversity and therefore seeks to bring together students of all races, creeds, and national origins, as well as varied economic and social backgrounds in hopes of exposing the students to a realistic environment.²⁵

²³John J. Wolter, "Discipline" (East Haddam, Connecticut: Becket Academy, Inc., 1970). (Mimeographed.)

²⁴Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut, interviews with Sidney DuPont, Joseph LaFrance, Neal Rist, and Chris Warren, May 26, 1971.

²⁵Becket Academy, brochure, 1970, p. 5.

The fact that the school does not subscribe to any one method or educational philosophy allows the staff the flexibility to choose the best way to educate individual boys in a particular discipline.²⁶ The Academy adheres to the tenet that people learn best when they are happy, and that people are happy when treated as special and unique persons. The staff believes in rewarding industry and makes conscious attempts to discern between sincere confusion and laziness.²⁷

The faculty assumes the responsibility to exemplify a "zest for living" so that students will seek an active adulthood and try to set realistic goals for themselves. Aware that students, teachers, and parents are human beings and, as such, will make mistakes, the faculty owns up to their mistakes and expects the same honesty from students and parents. "We work hard and expect the same industry from others. This is life--and we want our boys to grasp its meaning and to embrace it passionately."²⁸

Communication

Communication is particularly important between students, parents and faculty. It is important that besides maximum contact with students, staff members are able to talk freely with parents. "This, we call 'mutual counseling' because we all receive insights into ourselves.

²⁶Ibid., p. 9.

²⁷Ibid., pp. 10-11.

²⁸Ibid., pp. 9-10.

Without open communication between everyone, we know our job will be only partially successful. We educate only with cooperation."²⁹

Facilities

The facilities also contribute to the school's objectives. "Rugged and spartan" are adjectives applied to the living quarters. Both faculty and students work at maintenance and construction. "We all sweep, scrub and straighten every morning and evening. This allows us to become knowledgeable of man's affection for his environment and his own personal obligations."³⁰

Student Finances

If a student enrolled at the Academy in 1970-71, the cost was \$2,975.00 for room, board and tuition. There was a non-refundable application fee of \$15.00 and an athletic fee of \$50.00. An expense account charge of \$200.00 was collected for each student and a minimum balance of \$75.00 was required to be maintained. Activities off the school ground, spending money, canteen, personal transportation, laundry, dry-cleaning, haircuts, damages, school store, church assessments, films, telephone calls, school pictures, testing, graduation fees, membership fees, medical fees, student insurance, and special tutoring or counseling were charged to the expense account.

The tuition was payable as follows:

\$100 when student accepted

²⁹Ibid., pp. 14-15.

³⁰Ibid., pp. 16-17.

50% of the balance on first day of school

50% on January 1st

It was the stated financial policy of the school to allow no refund in the case of dismissal or withdrawal. Scholarships to cover partial charges were granted to worthy applicants if the family could demonstrate financial need. These scholarships are required to be renewed annually.³¹

Support of students

The majority of the students were financed privately. However, five students received partial scholarships from the Academy; three students were totally financed by foundations; and two students were supported partially by foundations and partially by the school. Twenty-one students received total support, and two students received partial support from state agencies. Nineteen of these students received support from agencies in Connecticut, and two were funded by New Jersey and Rhode Island respectively.³²

Physical Development in 1970-71

Physical development during the Fiscal Year 1970-71 was concentrated on the chaplain's quarters, an athletic storage shed and renovation in the library and faculty apartments. This was the least amount of construction at Becket Academy since its beginning, and it was marked

³¹Brochure Supplement (Moodus, Connecticut: Becket Academy, Inc., 1970).

³²Accounts Receivable Book (East Haddam, Connecticut: Becket Academy, Inc., 1970-71).

by the lack of faculty and student participation in the construction and planning. This is not to say that there was not a major thrust in other areas: Calvin Johnson, Director of Maintenance, attended to repairs that had accumulated over the years. The new buildings have an assessed value of \$13,400.³³ The Academy entered the summer of 1971 in better condition in regard to maintenance and repair than any other year in the history of the school.³⁴

Program

The program at Becket Academy emphasizes work in basic study techniques as well as remedial and development reading. The program is conducted through close administration-teacher-student relationships in all phases of the life of the school. Close relationships between students and faculty, both in class and during activities, is the most essential part of the school's program, for it is through these personal contacts that ease of communication is established and an individual understanding of a student's needs is obtained. The faculty is assisted by a part-time psychiatric-social worker and a school physician.

Academic instruction

The school year, from the middle of September to the first of June, includes 180 days of instruction and the usual vacation periods, with four-day weekends approximately every month. The typical school day is from 8:00 A.M. through 9:30 P.M. There are special help periods,

³³Bogdan, "Appraisal," 1971.

³⁴Calvin Johnson, private interview at Becket Academy, East Haddam, Connecticut, April 28, 1971.

interscholastic and intramural sports and study halls before and after supper. Class size ranges from eight to thirteen boys. The student-teacher ratio is approximately eight to one.

Tutoring and special help classes are held in the afternoons and on Saturday mornings. Grades are posted and reported every three weeks, and standardized tests are given early in October to facilitate placement. The curriculum includes reading, composition, spelling, grammar, arithmetic, mathematics, social studies and science. French, art, drama and music are special activities. The average student, upon graduation, continues an academic program in the secondary school of his choice. Students generally attend private high schools, either non-sectarian or religiously orientated. A fair percentage return to public school.

In 1970-71, the students arrived on September 12. The school year terminated on Friday, June 4. For undergraduates, Saturday, June 5, was graduation. During the year there were seven recesses from four days to two weeks. Students are required to return home during these recesses which occur approximately every three and a half weeks. Students attend class from Monday to Saturday, which is a one-half day. There are thirty-two weeks of instruction.³⁵

The schedule of a typical school day is shown in Table 2. The day begins with assembly at about 8:00. The first class is at 8:30. The morning is divided into four periods of recitation with a fifteen-minute break between the second and third periods. Lunch is at approximately 12:00 noon, followed by two recitation classes in the afternoon.

³⁵Supplement, 1970, p. 4.

Recreation in the form of inter-scholastic or intramural sports, and outside activities, is scheduled between 2:00 and 4:30. There is a study hall from 5:00 to 6:00. After supper there is another study hall until 8:15, followed by canteen and general recreation until bedtime which is at 9:30.

TABLE 2

DAILY SCHEDULE^a

Rise	6:45
Breakfast	7:30
Assembly	8:00
1st Class	8:30 - 9:20
2nd Class	9:23 - 10:13
Break	10:13
3rd Class	10:28 - 11:18
4th Class	11:21 - 12:11
Lunch	12:15 - 12:45
5th Class	12:50 - 1:40
6th Class	1:43 - 2:33
Afternoon athletics and free time	2:45
Study hall	5:00 - 6:00
Supper	6:00 - 6:45
Study hall	7:00 - 8:00
Canteen	8:00 - 9:20
Lights out	9:30

^aTaken from the daily schedule, September 1970

There are variations on Wednesdays, Friday evenings, Saturday and Sunday as mentioned in text. Classes meet for fifty minutes with three minutes in between.

This schedule was adhered to from Sunday night through Friday afternoon with the exception of Wednesday which was an experimental day in regard to academics for the first half of the year. Wednesday afternoon

was devoted to chores in the dormitory, laundry, and purchasing personal items in the school store. Friday evening, Saturday afternoon, and Sundays were free time, or comprised free time with the exception of special activities.

The class size ranged from a low of eight to a maximum of thirteen. All homework was completed in class or in a supervised study hall. Room study was allowed to ninth graders and to students who were particularly responsible and attained above average grades. Students who were unable to complete work without supervision were required to attend supervised study hall. Liberal use of the library was made for recreational reading and required research assignments.³⁶

Courses and subjects

As diagramed in Table 3, all students, with the exception of upper sections of the seventh, eighth and ninth grades, were required to take reading, and all students were required to take mathematics or algebra, social studies and English.

On Wednesdays during the first semester (September to January) the school experimented with a "Science Day" in an attempt to integrate the social, physical and biological sciences, which offered large group instruction, small group discussion, and application. This course was not offered to the ninth grade who took a required course in Earth Science. French was taught to the ninth grade and the upper section of the eighth grade. A course in French was offered to seventh graders during the second semester (February to June).

³⁶Christopher Warren, private interview at Becket Academy, East Haddam, Connecticut, June 4, 1971.

TABLE 3

GRADE LEVEL CURRICULUM 1970-71

Grades	Required Courses									Optional Courses					
	Language Arts	Reading	Mathematics	Algebra	Social Studies- Science Day	Science	Social Studies	French	Organized Physical Education	Art	Music	Drama	Religion	Varsity Sports	Team Sports
4	x	x	x		x				x						
5	x	x	x		x				x						
6	x	x	x		x				x						
7a	x		x		x			x	x						
7b	x	x	x		x				x						
8a	x		x		x			x	x						
8b	x	x	x		x				x						
8c	x	x	x		x				x						
8d	x	x	x		x				x						
9	x		x	x		x	x	x	x						

Marks were posted approximately every three weeks and reports were given to the students and sent to the parents at the same time. Grades are numerical.

Students were freely moved from section to section depending upon achievement or maturity. Art, music, drama were offered as club and special activities on a voluntary basis. Most students participated in either the art or music programs, which were informal in nature. Private instructions were available in piano and guitar. Dramatics was extra-curricular.

Religion, not compulsory, was taken by all but a few students. The primary responsibility for this instruction was assumed by Father Ivan Ferguson, an ordained Roman Catholic priest, and the Reverend Charles Separk, an ordained minister of the Church of Christ, Congregational. Jewish boys attended services in town on Friday evenings.

Testing

The Iowa Test of Basic Skills, Form I and II, was given in October and the alternate form was given in April. Otis I.Q. Tests, Beta and Gamma Form, were given in January. These tests were used generally as diagnostic and placement instruments. The May testing is solely for the benefit of teachers and for self-evaluation and to measure student progress. Students who wish to enter certain schools are required to take the Secondary Schools Admissions Test published by the Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey. The staff makes no attempt to alter its program or prepare its students for this test or any other test. This year, only one student is to be considered retained.

The curricula followed in reading, English and mathematics generally meet the standards set by the National Association of Independent Schools, but are modified on the basis of student achievement and ability; teachers are free to pursue these studies employing their own selection of available materials.³⁷ There is no set curriculum in science and social studies, art and music, with the exception of the ninth grade where earth science is required.

Approximately fifteen percent of the instructional time is spent out of formal class. Audio-visual aids are used about ten percent of the time.

Guidance

The guidance at Becket Academy is conducted by the entire staff, including the nurse. Faculty are encouraged to be aware of the backgrounds and permanent records of each student. Christopher Warren has general supervision of this area. As part of his duties he knows thoroughly each student's background and records.

Other Programs

During the school year, Becket Academy staff members organized and planned three programs which, besides enabling students to benefit, allowed individual faculty members to gain administrative experience,

³⁷Definition of Requirements for 1969 (Boston, Massachusetts: National Association of Independent Schools, 1969).

Minimum Curriculum for Kindergarten through Grade 5 (arithmetic), (Boston, Massachusetts: National Association of Independent Schools, 1970).

Minimum Curriculum for Kindergarten through Grade 5 (English, Reading and Spelling) (Boston: National Association of Independent Schools, 1970).

innovate, experiment, and in many cases aroused public interest in the ecological abuses of our natural environment.

The Connecticut River Expedition

This is a six-week summer program for thirty boys under the direction of Sidney DuPont, a faculty member. This program, which has received national attention, is an in-depth study of the environment of the Connecticut River Valley from Canada to the Long Island Sound.³⁸

The first week of the course is at Becket Academy where students are trained in water-testing procedures, geology, biology, botany, and the economy and history of New England. They are also taught camping skills.

The project culminates with a 415-mile canoe trip from the Canadian border to the Long Island Sound where the boys compile data for the "Becket Log," which is a detailed account of the ecology of the Connecticut River Valley. Over 1,000 of these Logs are sent to legislatures, town offices, industry and interested parties. 1970 was the third expedition at a cost of \$700.00. Scholarships were given.³⁹

³⁸Becket Adventures, Brochure 1970, Moodus, Connecticut, "I Watched A River Fight for Its Life," National Geographic School Bulletin (Washington, D.C.: Vol. 49, Number 3, September 28, 1970).

"The Connecticut, Can the River be Saved from Its Own Beauty?" The New York Times Magazine, January 12, 1969.

³⁹Letter from Edmund Muskie (Senator), Washington, D.C., January 27, 1971; letter from Thomas Meskill (Governor of Connecticut), Hartford, Connecticut, January 26, 1971; letter from the Office of the Vice President of the United States, Washington, D.C., January 27, 1971.

Long Island Sound Expedition

This expedition, first undertaken in summer 1971, was planned by its director, Sidney DuPont, a member of the Becket Academy staff. Designed for eleven boys, it was a six-week study of the waters, shoals, marine life, estuaries, geology, geography, economics and history of the Long Island Sound Area. The procedure of the study is similar to the Connecticut River Expedition with the exception that the investigation is conducted from a thirty-eight foot yawl. This study has also published its findings.⁴⁰

Becket Academy Summer School

This program, open to boys, both boarding and day, from grades four to nine, is designed to provide intensive remedial work in mathematics, reading, spelling, vocabulary, penmanship, grammar, sentence structure and composition. The program, casual in nature, maximizes student-teacher relationships. While primarily designed for study, a large part of the program includes swimming, fishing, camping, hiking, movies, arts and crafts. In 1970 there were forty-six boys enrolled at a cost of \$700.00 per student.

Extra Curriculum Activities

Athletics

The athletics program at Becket Academy is extensive but only as a part of the total program. Athletics assume importance only if they help the student. Cooperation is stressed, not only among the boys on

⁴⁰"Becket Adventures: Long Island Expedition," brochure 1971 (Moodus, Connecticut: Becket Academy, Inc., 1971).

the team, but also among the professional staff members so that flexibility is assured. The school realizes that athletics means different things for different boys. For example, an overweight boy may need body building, while another boy would learn cooperation, and still a third a healthy attitude toward competition. Skills are taught along with appreciation of team and individual competition. "Our teams win and lose; that is the way we like it. As a faculty, we feel the purpose of athletics is lost without a sense of enjoyment. In 1970-71, physical fitness in the form of calisthenics was not emphasized in our program."⁴¹

However, a program of team sports which competed with public schools and other independent schools was emphasized. Inter-scholastic competition in the fall included six-man tackle football for the first time, soccer, and cross country. In the winter the school competed inter-scholastically in basketball with inner inter-scholastic competition in hockey, wrestling, swimming, and winter track. Baseball, track and field were spring inter-scholastic sports. With the exception of tackle football, all these sports were conducted on an intramural or casual basis. In the spring, physical education classes in basic skills were given to the lower grades as part of their school program.

"Away" games frequently interfered with the academic program, but a spirit of cooperation among the staff allowed this to cause a minimum of inconvenience. Boys competed in athletic events, mainly within the State of Connecticut, but also traveling to Maine, Massachusetts, New York, and Washington, D.C. In 1970-71, there was more emphasis on

⁴¹Joseph LaFrance, personal interview.

competitive sports than in any year of the history of the school. The Academy has an athletic club with membership in the Amateur Athletic Union and the Connecticut Independent School Athletic League.

Activities

The club and activities program was both casual and varied. The program exists and grows primarily out of student and faculty interest. Skiing and camping were perhaps the most popular, followed by work projects, model building, fishing, art, radio club, canoeing and games. There was live entertainment almost every Friday night, and a regular movie program. Much time was spent in exploring the countryside and just plain "hacking around." Each week, trips were taken to museums, the Connecticut State Capitol, shipyards, Dinosaur State Park, and the Groton Submarine Base.⁴²

Social activities

Students are allowed radios and phonographs in their rooms and each dormitory floor has a recreation room for congregating, games and T.V. Seven dances during the year are organized and conducted by the students and faculty chaperons. There were two Parent Days, organized strictly for socialization. The students produced three plays open to the public. Boys were frequently invited out to other schools and private homes for social activities.

⁴²Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut. Interviews with Sidney DuPont, Patrick Scully, Christopher Warren, Joseph LaFrance.

Service

During 1970-71, students at Becket Academy offered their services to the local community as political campaign workers and as maintenance workers in school-organized and town-organized "clean-ups." They were active in "letter-writing" campaigns to congressmen and Hanoi, and they conducted an ecological study of Cape Cod which was published in Scholastic Magazine.⁴³

The students also volunteered service within the school community. Every aspect of the school's operations was either maintained, operated or assisted by students. This included maintaining the buildings and grounds, painting, decorating, ordering food, waiting on tables, dishwashing, and performing secretarial and office duties. Students were allowed time during the school day to work on conservation projects and to help faculty families with chores and baby-sitting.

Religious activities

Students are expected to attend church services on Sunday and to participate in the liturgy of their respective faiths. Roman Catholic services and a Protestant service were conducted on campus, although students frequently attended church "off campus."

Students Admissions

Becket Academy accepts only male boarding students between the ages of eight to fifteen. Applicants are accepted in all grades, on the basis of the student's and parent's willingness to cooperate with the

⁴³Victoria Chapman, "Canoeing the Connecticut River," Junior Scholastic Magazine, September 11, 1969.

school's program. A personal interview, a transcript, recommendation, and a demonstration of normal intelligence and emotional stability are also required. The interview is especially important since the Academy's primary admissions' concern is to determine if the student will respond to the Becket program. Boys who do not wish to attend the Academy are not accepted. "We only accept those boys we feel we can educate. Our policy is straight-forward and has absolutely no restrictions or quotas in regard to race, creed or national origin. We make no attempt to screen students for academic, athletic prowess, or social background. Admissions is strictly on a first come first admitted basis."⁴⁴

Data

In 1970-71, the enrollment was 116 boys. Table 4 indicates the statistics on the total student body, showing that there were fifty-two new enrollments and sixty-four returning students. During the year, thirteen boys left for various reasons. Of the boys enrolled, thirty-four had been held back in school at least one year. Ninety were Roman Catholic, two Jewish, and twenty-four were Protestant. Thirteen black students were among the fifty-two new students enrolled. Of the students, four were adopted, twenty-nine were from divorced families, eight had deceased parents. Most of these students were referred either by friends, other private schools, members of the clergy, or Catholic schools. The remainder came from various other sources.

The known occupations of the parents were mainly in business fields, or factory workers and laborers. A fair number were employed

⁴⁴Becket Academy, brochure, 1970, p. 4.

TABLE 4

TOTAL STUDENT BODY CHART - YEAR 1970-1971

Total number of students.	116
New enrollment.	52
Returning boys.	64
Students that left during year.	13
Students held back.	34
Religion	
Roman Catholic.	90
Protestant.	24
Jewish.	2
Race	
White.	103
Black.	13
Adopted boys.	4
Boys from divorced families.	29
Boys whose parents were deceased.	8
States boys came from	
Connecticut.	54
New York.	32
Massachusetts.	5
Rhode Island.	3
Vermont.	1
New Jersey.	9
Other.	11
Foreign.	2

Note: Compiled from student records, applications and folders.

by the government or in education. The remainder spanned a variety of professions from entertainment to editing. By and large, the educational

aspirations of the parents for their children or wards was undecided. Of those who expressed an opinion, most wished their youngster to attend public school. Table 4 shows that the majority, fifty-four, of the students came from Connecticut; thirty-two came from New York; nine from New Jersey; three from Rhode Island; five from Massachusetts; one from Vermont; two from out of the country; and the rest from other states.

As a group, the students showed progress, advancing on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills an average of one year, one month over a tested period from October 1 to April 3, 1971. Their average I.Q. on the Otis Test was 100.

The students responded well to the Becket Academy program, performing their chores satisfactorily and participating in the various activities to the maximum.

The general appearance of the students was neat and clean. Appearance, a source of controversy in many schools, was not a problem at Becket Academy in 1970-71. The morale was high. Of the graduating students, nineteen are returning for the ninth grade, seven will attend public school, five plan to attend non-sectarian board schools, six will attend Sectarian Board schools, one will go to a non-sectarian day school, and four will attend religious orientated day schools.⁴⁵

Faculty

Data on faculty 1970-71

⁴⁵"Student Guidance Folders," Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut, 1970-71 and Placement Records of Christopher J. Warren for Graduates 1971.

As indicated in Table 5, the 1970-1971 school year began with thirteen full-time faculty members, two without college degrees. One additional teacher was added in November, and one of the non-degree professional staff members was replaced with a degree teacher. Of the five teachers possessing a Master's Degree, all have additional study work beyond the degree. Of the eight faculty members with Bachelor's Degrees, only four are studying for their Master's Degree. Two are degree candidates. Four of the fourteen teachers at Becket Academy possess or are eligible for state certification.

All the professional faculty members are male, American-born Caucasians. Eight are married (five with children), and the rest are bachelors. Nine resided in the dormitory, four had private homes or apartments on the campus, and one lived off the school grounds. All but three are of the Roman Catholic faith and these three are of the Protestant faith. The oldest faculty member is thirty-eight and the youngest is twenty-two. The average age is twenty-nine. The major interests of these teachers outside their job are sports or outdoor activities, with other interests in art, music and library science.⁴⁶

Table 5 reveals that one staff member has been at the Academy since its founding seven years ago. Two have been at the Academy for five years, one for four years, three for three years, one for two years, and six were new on the staff this past year. Of these teachers, ten came to the Academy because of a sincere interest in the work of the

⁴⁶Becket Academy, Inc. East Haddam, Connecticut, interviews with entire faculty, May 19, 1971.

TABLE 5

TABLE FOR FACULTY 1970-71 - NOVEMBER 1970^a

Total number of faculty.	14
With Bachelor degree	8
With Masters degree.	5
No degree.	1
With Masters degree with advanced study.	5
With Bachelor degree studying.	4
Sex	
Male	14
Female	0
Race	
White.	14
Black.	0
Yellow	0
Religion	
Roman Catholic	11
Protestant	3
Other.	0
Age	
Oldest	38
Youngest	22
Average.	29
Years at Academy	
7 years.	1
6 years.	0
5 years.	2
4 years.	1
3 years.	3
2 years.	1
1 year	6
Experience	
Total years.	49
Over 10 years.	2
Over 5 years.	1
Over 3 years but under 5 years.	4
2 years.	3
1 year	2
New.	2

TABLE 5--CONTINUED

Residence	
On-campus dormitory.	9
On-campus homes.	4
Off-campus	1
Marital status	
Married.	8
Single	6

^aCompiled from Faculty Employment Folders.

school or because it was an available position. One teacher resigned at the termination of the school year to attend law school, and one resigned to attend graduate school. One teacher was given a leave of absence, and one was retained part time so that he could complete a residency for a Ph.D. degree.⁴⁷

At the beginning of the 1970-71 school year the faculty had a combined total of forty-nine years experience. Two teachers had over ten years experience, one teacher over five years, four with three years or more, but less than five years. Three members had two years experience, two had one year, and two had no previous teaching experience.

The school uses the services of John Jay Ashe, a psychiatric-social worker, who sees eight boys on a weekly basis and advises the headmaster and faculty on matters of guidance and discipline. He has been associated with the school for six years in various capacities.

Becket Academy employs the services of two full-resident nurses and one non-resident nurse.

⁴⁷Ibid.

Salaries and benefits

All professional faculty employed at Becket Academy received Blue Cross and Connecticut Medical insurance and a Major Medical Plan by the Phoenix Mutual Insurance Company. This coverage includes \$3,000 to \$5,000 in life insurance benefits. 1970-71 was the first year that this benefit was included.⁴⁸ The faculty also worked under Workman's Compensation and the Social Security System. A faculty study committee has recommended a retirement program to be studied by the Board of Trustees.

All faculty members, with two exceptions, receive housing which includes heat, electricity and repairs. Dining hall privileges are available to each faculty member and his family, along with full use of the school's facilities and equipment. These prerequisites had a value of between \$2,000 and \$5,000, depending upon accommodations and size of family. Reimbursement for courses for advanced degrees was received by professional faculty. Full reimbursement is also paid to faculty members to attend conferences, workshops and other schools, including time and travel.

The highest cash salaries are \$11,000 and \$10,500. The first does not receive reimbursement for housing, but the second does. The lowest cash salary is \$3,000 for an eight-month year to a teacher with a limited schedule. This teacher has another position as the full-time minister at the local Congregational Church. Two other faculty members are paid on a weekly basis for duties performed. For the remaining nine faculty members the cash salaries range from \$4,500 to \$11,000. The

⁴⁸Becket Academy, Inc. (East Haddam, Connecticut), Minutes of Meeting, August 29, 1970.

average cash salary, excluding the faculty paid on a work-performed basis, the Congregational minister and the nurse, is \$7,170. Summer employment is available for faculty members.⁴⁹

Faculty duties

Academic.--The average teaching load at Becket Academy is five instructional classes per day, and one study hall. Faculty members with additional duties may have their responsibilities reduced by one or two classes per day. One teacher only supervises afternoon and evening study halls, and another teaches only music outside the academic day. While there is an attempt to give teachers the courses and age groups they prefer, they are expected to be able to instruct in any of the grammar school subjects. There is no provision for substitute teachers. In the event a teacher cannot attend class, he is expected to make his own substitute arrangements.

There is a constant shifting of classes, depending on the needs of the school, the children, and the desires of the staff. In 1970-71, there was one complete revision of teaching schedules which occurred at mid-year. In addition to regular classes, teachers are expected to take their turn at morning assembly.

Activities.--All staff members are assigned full-time activities in the afternoons which require at least four afternoons of participation. The activities are: all sports, library, discipline, guidance, art, music or drama. Normally these activities require time ranging from one

⁴⁹Payroll Record Book (Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut, 1970-71).

to four hours per day. These activities meet with success in proportion to the interest and direction of the staff member and students. In 1970-71, interscholastic sports and trips were a great success as were library, art and music lessons.

Dormitory and Dining Hall.--All teachers were assigned duties in the dormitory and dining hall. In 1970-71 these duties were reduced to an absolute minimum, the faculty members being on duty only one or two days per week and every third weekend. In the dormitory the faculty supervised the personal cleanliness of each student, the cleanliness and order of the dormitory, the distribution of an evening snack, and the general morale and deportment of the students in the dormitory.⁵⁰ This arrangement was tried because the faculty felt a staff member could handle large groups of students on an infrequent basis as opposed to handling small groups of students on a frequent basis. Generally, this arrangement was unsatisfactory as consistency was not maintained.⁵¹

In the dining hall, certain faculty members were assigned to be present at definite meals; otherwise attendance at the dining hall was optional. Faculty members were not required to sit at tables with students; rather, separate faculty tables were maintained. This arrangement ensued because it was felt that students should have the opportunity to talk and relax among themselves without a faculty member monitoring

⁵⁰Joseph LaFrance, Dormitory Procedures, Becket Academy, Inc., 1970. (Mimeographed.)

⁵¹Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut, interviews with Gilbert Morneault, Patrick Scully, Robert Morahan, Curt Hunter, May 26, 1971, faculty meeting.

the conversations. It was also felt that faculty tables allowed the staff the opportunity to discuss common problems and socialize without student interference. The latter worked exceedingly well and faculty attendance at meals was generally good. The former had a mixed degree of success, and while the students had the freedom to engage in their own topics of conversation, students who needed adult guidance did not receive it and generally had difficulty in the form of harassment by their fellow students.⁵²

Recruitment

Of the six additional staff members in 1970-71, three were personal friends of faculty members and recruited by them, and three applied for positions independently and were screened from approximately fifty applicants. These teachers were carefully checked and were required to visit the school and meet with staff members for approval. They were hired for specific needs. In all cases, recommendations were scrutinized and in one instance, a faculty member accompanied the headmaster to Pennsylvania to observe the applicant for two days. Three of the new faculty members were hired for newly created positions.

Headmaster

John Wolter, the headmaster and founder, spent the school year 1970-71 at the University of Massachusetts in the center for Leadership and Administration. He was granted a Sabbatical with full salary and was awarded a Fellowship by the National Association of Independent

⁵²Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut, interviews with Beulah Cromeenes, Sidney DuPont, Joseph LaFrance, May 1971.

Schools. Mr. Wolter spent at least four days per week at the university in Amherst. The remainder of the time was spent on the Becket Academy campus working on university projects or giving general supervision and guidance to the Senior Faculty members at the Academy. He maintained contact with the school offices through the school bookkeeper and the school accountant and lawyer.

Finances

The finances at Becket Academy in 1970-71 were relatively uncomplicated, since no major projects were undertaken and the corporate status of Becket Academy and Becket School were on a definite schedule. Significant expenditures were for medical and life insurance for the professional faculty, for athletic supplies which completely equipped Becket Academy with the finest equipment and uniforms, and for the maintenance of buildings needing repairs. Careful scrutiny of the actual expenditures, as opposed to budget, show a considerable amount of over-expenditure in many areas. This can be attributed to inflationary pressures as well as in the fact that, in the headmaster's absence, the finances of the school were not closely scrutinized. The school, however, did end its fiscal year with a surplus of \$13,383.⁵³

A pending suit between Becket Academy and Wilcox and Reynolds was settled out of court for \$5,000 which was the only unexpected change in regard to the Academy's assets.⁵⁴ In addition, \$2,942 of the money

⁵³See Appendix I.

⁵⁴This suit involved reimbursement for a breakdown of the boiler in Baruch Hall.

received from State Aid under Public Act #791 had to be repaid because the Act was declared unconstitutional.⁵⁵

Summary

In this chapter, the author summarized Becket Academy as it existed during the school year 1970-71 in a variety of areas--location, accreditation, assets, objectives, physical structure, programs and organization. The question, how did Becket Academy achieve the successful position described in this chapter, will be answered in subsequent chapters. It appears that the Academy's existence is in contradiction to current trends. The reader should realize that many events, processes and variables had to be co-ordinated for Becket Academy to enjoy the status it attained during the 1970-1971 school year from its inception in 1964.

⁵⁵Letter from Alfred L. Villa, Hartford, Connecticut, State Department of Education, July 16, 1971.

CHAPTER III

OBJECTIVES OF BECKET ACADEMY

Chapter II outlined Becket Academy as it existed during the school year 1970-71 in the following areas: location, accreditation, approval, corporate structure, internal organization, philosophy, building and grounds, physical development, finances, costs, programs, students and faculty. It was presented first in order to show the rapid growth of the Academy from its corporation value of \$1,000 in 1964 to a corporation controlling assets of over \$1,000,000 in 1971. In this chapter, an attempt will be made to explain the founder's beliefs or philosophy of education which, like the philosophy of education in any school, has gone through various stages of growth. Becket Academy in 1971 is different from the Becket Academy of 1964. The difference is not one of ideology, but lies rather in the changes brought about by a process of refinement and reshuffling of priorities, necessitated by the demands acting on the Academy and its people during the seven years of the school's existence.

Since most of the objectives of Becket Academy stem from the ideals and dreams of its founder and headmaster, John Wolter, this chapter reviews those experiences of his that resulted in the formation of the values embodied in the Academy's program of education. The effect of these values on the students and faculty is also analyzed.

Becket's remarkable growth in such a short time cannot be fully understood without taking into account the events that shaped the personality so largely responsible for that growth. The first half of this

chapter, therefore, was deliberately written in the first person viewpoint of the founder and headmaster in order to accent the influence these experiences had on Mr. Wolter, it being felt that an objective narration would result in lessening their impact and meaningfulness. The following statements of the headmaster have been substantiated by documented material in the footnotes.

The Founder

Because I had so consistently failed in high school,¹ I felt I could understand the frustrations that many boys encounter in attempting to meet society's demands. It was this very sense of frustration that literally drove me into the United States Marine Corps where I hoped I could have a fresh start. While I was in the Marine Corps, I worked hard and found myself getting good marks on tests.² I saw other boys my age with seventh grade educations also passing tests with high marks. For some, there was a spirit of everyone can do.

This was also a time when many of the manly arts were encouraged. The comradeship seemed to break down barriers for everyone. People talked about real things. I also watched people at this time be transformed physically. I saw the fat get skinny, the skinny get fat all in a short period of time. This stuck in my mind. I had also not seen

¹Transcripts of Academic Records, John J. Wolter, Pelham Memorial High School, Pelham, New York, 1954.

²Basic Test Battery Scores on John J. Wolter, 1477480, United States Marine Corps, Service Record Book, Washington, D.C., October 11, 1955, p. 8.

instruction by a group of teachers equal to the instruction given by the instructors at Parris Island. Everyone got it.³

I also observed that the Marine Corps taught people to take care of themselves. Inspired by individual and group examples of sheer determination, and by the feeling of comradeship which was shared and is still shared by all Marines, I applied myself all the harder and, upon completion of my recruit training, was designated "The Outstanding Man for Platoon 147."⁴ I also received a general classification I.Q. score of 125,⁵ in marked contrast to the formal tests taken in high school where my total scores did not approach average. This was the first time in my life that I felt a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction. Inspired by this, I continued to apply myself and, in less than a year after my enlistment, I was rewarded with the rank of sergeant.⁶

From these Marine Corps experiences, I had learned the value of industry for the attainment of goals and the accompanying sense of accomplishment. I had also seen what the proper kind of instruction and example can do, and I had experienced firsthand the truth that people can be transformed under rugged but inspiring conditions. The spirit of comradeship had been instilled in me, and a sense of mission in life began to stir.

³John J. Wolter, "Thoughts on Education," paper prepared for speech to parents, Becket Academy, Inc., 1967, p. 2.

⁴Cpt. T. J. Hix, "Administrative Remarks," Service Record Book, Washington, D.C., December 28, 1955, p. 11.

⁵Test Scores, p. 8.

⁶"Certificate of Promotion, United States Marine Corps," for John J. Wolter, 1477480, Washington, D.C., October 1, 1956.

It was during a three-month sea voyage from Japan to Saudi Arabia and back that ideas began to fall into place in regard to my future and a meaningful goal. At first I was undecided whether to remain in the Marine Corps or become a teacher. I finally decided against a career with the Marines for I considered myself too gentle for the long haul.⁷ To become a teacher, however, meant I would have to return to college, and I was well aware that I had serious academic deficiencies. But my experience in the Marine Corps had shown me that the key to overcoming deficiencies was hard work and that the challenge for boys to overcome their deficiencies should be laid right at their feet so that they know what they must do. That is, they must have the inner fibre to know that things will be tough and that they must never give up. They must be taught to handle themselves and to face the world.⁸

With these thoughts in mind, I regarded college as merely an obstacle to be overcome in order to achieve a higher goal. Remembering what hard work and application had done for me in the Marines, I tackled my college studies in the same spirit and completed the four-year course in three years and was elected to the National Historical Honor Society.⁹

The New Rochelle experience

My first position as a teacher was in New Rochelle, New York, where I taught Social Studies and English to Junior High School students.

⁷Wolter, "Thoughts on Education," p. 3.

⁸Ibid., pp. 2-3.

⁹"Certificate of Membership Phi Alpha Theta," University of Dayton, Ohio, Delta-Eta Chapter, March 8, 1959.

Here I encountered another obstacle: in order to attain a permanent teaching position in New Rochelle, I would have to have a Master's Degree. I enrolled in a Master's Degree program at Fordham University and obtained my degree in a year and a half.

Although I had enthusiasm for a career as a teacher, my experience in the New Rochelle school system was a disappointment. I observed that the majority of the teachers failed to pay proper attention to the students, and the students were not receiving the kind of education relevant to their needs. The key ingredients necessary for achievement--a sense of purpose and a willingness to work hard--that I had learned from the Marine Corps, were lacking in the students and in the majority of the faculty as well. There was no group, nor even much individual, effort on the part of the professional staff, and there was no overriding objectives in the educational program, no encouragement nor reward for industry.

It was at this point that I realized I must begin anew and in a direction where I could feel a sense of freedom to inspire and motivate students and fellow faculty members.

Decision to found a school

It was in November, 1961, that the idea of founding a school came strongly to my mind. Although I lacked financial resources for such an undertaking, I decided to explore the possibilities. I began by enlisting the active help of Paul Papparella, a fellow dissatisfied teacher. We started by visiting Canterbury School in New Milford, Connecticut, a boarding school for boys, controlled and operated by laymen. Ecumenical

in nature, Canterbury School seemed an ideal atmosphere for the education of boys. The visit inspired me to continue my search.

In early December, Paul Papparella and I met Dr. Roagland, Dean of the Graduate School at Fairfield University. Dr. Roagland advised us to contact James Hanrahan who was contemplating to build a school in Colchester, Connecticut, to be called "St. Thomas More School." After visiting the roughsite of the school-to-be, I responded to the challenge for I felt that by being a part of St. Thomas More School I would be able to practice my beliefs in an atmosphere similar to that of Canterbury School. I would be able to work and inspire boys both in the classroom and in all their activities, and I would feel in myself a sense of work and devotion. I knew that this new school, if it were to survive, would need physical, moral, emotional, and spiritual dedication. On the practical side, I would also be learning the mechanics of founding a school.¹⁰

During the two years I remained at St. Thomas More School, I helped to supervise the construction, bought all the food for the dining hall, was Dean of Discipline, assistant headmaster, taught history, supervised maintenance, and was athletic director.¹¹

The best part of my experience at St. Thomas More School was my work with boys who had been failures and malcontents in previous schools. I saw that each boy had potential, and that every boy, when properly handled, willingly helped to establish St. Thomas More School. Through my

¹⁰Mental reflections of John J. Wolter.

¹¹Ibid.

constant motivation and contact with these problem boys. I sought to instill in them a bond of comradeship between themselves and the faculty, a sense of duty, a school spirit, and a capacity for hard work.¹² Many became enthusiastic successes because, like the Marines at Parris Island, these boys wished to be involved with real things and people in an atmosphere which encouraged honesty and which rewarded industry in a simple way. These boys had a sense of religious purpose and would themselves actively seek religious and moral training and discussion.¹³

The birth of Becket Academy's objectives

It was during my years at St. Thomas More School that a value system of education began to emerge from my past experiences and ideals. In general, it was a belief that we, as human beings, have been put on earth for a reason, and that this reason can be found only by intense industry, prayer and loyalty. I also felt that the best time to instill this belief in boys was previous to high school before they became too involved in an active social life, resented authority, and insisted upon doing it their own way.¹⁴ Anxious to put my belief into practice, I began work on the formation of Becket Academy, a boarding school for young boys in grades four through eight "because we believe that proper attitudes contributing to a sound character can best be given at this time in a well-ordered environment."¹⁵

From its inception, the primary objective of Becket Academy has been to "produce scholastically sound and mature boys in full control of

¹²Ibid. ¹³Ibid. ¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Becket Academy, brochure, Colchester, Connecticut, 1964.

their God-given potentials. Thus, they will be well prepared to enter and succeed in their chosen high school program."¹⁶ To achieve this objective, I knew that the qualities of hard work, comradeship, school spirit, and a sense of duty to self were necessary.¹⁷ Just as essential was an atmosphere that fostered these qualities. I decided that the school should be located in a rural setting that would allow it to develop a total educational environment uncluttered by the things that distract young boys. I believed that in the granite of the hills, formidable climate and beautiful scenery a certain quality is injected into the student. This quality is straight from nature and perhaps our greatest asset.¹⁸

The buildings and surroundings created at the school were spartan and rough, by necessity at the beginning and by design after 1967, since I believed such an environment would bring the boys closer to the basic realities of their existence.¹⁹

The classroom atmosphere has also remained simple by an intensive academic program of reading, writing, grammar, mathematics and spelling. The basic skills and attitudes associated with these subjects help to produce the self-discipline necessary for achieving the true intellectual curiosity needed for success in the study of languages,

¹⁶Ibid. This statement can be found in almost every subsequent brochure or major address on the school's objectives.

¹⁷Reflections from mind, John J. Wolter.

¹⁸John Wolter, "Statement of Philosophy for Evaluation," East Haddam, Connecticut, October, 1967, p. 2. (Mimeographed.)

¹⁹Becket Academy, brochure, 1970, pp. 16-17.

scientific studies, etc. The school is committed to self-learning, but in a climate so pointed that the child may develop self-discipline and the freedom inherited with it.²⁰

To achieve this self-discipline and freedom, the Academy upholds the principle that youth must learn his own potential very early in life. To do this he must be allowed to operate as much as possible by his own resources. To achieve excellence in the classroom, sports, or aesthetic things, he must first know himself, and then understand fully that his advancement is in his own hands. In this way the boy sees the uniqueness of himself and therefore the uniqueness of others. This is precisely as we see human nature here at Becket Academy and this directs our educational philosophy. Every person is unique, an individual. Thus we probe into a boy's background, in order that we may know him. After being satisfied that we have an understanding of a boy's uniqueness, we try to develop his qualities by the various methods at our disposal. Once the boy begins his process of development, we keep painstaking records on his advancement and constantly evaluate his success and failure and in turn modify our programs.

We are particularly alert for physical deficiencies as well as academic and spiritual ones, for problems in these areas often block achievement of self-discipline and success.²¹

The school knows, moreover, that if the student is to succeed later in life, he must not be isolated from reality and must be sensitive

²⁰Wolter, "Statement of Philosophy," pp. 1-2.

²¹Ibid., pp. 2-3.

to the needs of others. Life at Becket Academy promotes this, for the boy soon realizes that he is part of a "community of other people with needs similar to his, but often different from his. Thus he must not only know himself, but he must realize he can only attain his potential within the limits of society, whether the society be the family, the school, the community, or various organizations."²²

Emphasis on parent contact

The school realizes the need of strong family contacts as a way to promote communication, not only between the student and his family but also between the faculty and families of the individual boys. The school thus exercises a policy which enables the students and parents to know and understand the aims of the Academy so they may participate in the shaping of the future of the school. This naturally promotes much self-evaluation and critical analysis which will in turn benefit the school. With this atmosphere, a bond is established among the boy and parents and faculty and headmaster. This bond is exemplified by a spirit of cooperation and constant communication. By this an unbroken chain is maintained to give the child the necessary stability and sense of belonging in an environment including himself, his family, his tutors, and his peers.²³

Importance of a dedicated faculty

The Academy has been able to institute and follow these objectives by a dedicated and energetic faculty working in a tutorial atmosphere

²²Ibid., p. 2. ²³Ibid., p. 4.

stressing fundamental study skills. Naturally, religious and moral training, self-discipline, and physical education are emphasized by example as well as by instruction.²⁴ The faculty has been able to teach its ideals to the students, not only in the classroom, but also during recreational, sport and cultural activities, and conversation. Especially important is the direct observation by the student of mature adults moving about in their daily existence.²⁵

Concerning the teachers, I knew I would need mature people with a youthful sensitive approach to life and children. The vital question I asked myself in 1964 when interviewing a prospective faculty member was and still remains, "Would I like my son to grow into an adult like this man?" If I could answer this question in the affirmative, the interview continued. I knew almost any competent adult could teach elementary school subjects if he loved children. Once this objective was met, I pointedly and often bluntly sought "workers," not only because I knew they could succeed happily, but I realized that the observation of these people by the students would help to create the capacity for work and comradeship in themselves. Dr. Wilson Parkhill remarked in his Preliminary Report in 1966,

Members of the faculty consulted seemed very pleased with their jobs, and seemed willing to go the extra half mile to meet the ideal which an energetic headmaster demands.²⁶

This spirit and capacity for work was further attested to by the Connecticut Association of Independent Schools Report a year later which noted:

²⁴Ibid. ²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Dr. Wilson Parkhill, "Preliminary Report on Becket Academy" (Belgrade, Maine, October 11, 1966), p. 2.

. . . an overall spirit of willingness, interest and dedication and enthusiasm (especially in the face of heavy scholastic and extra-curricular loads) which contributes to the effectiveness and growth of the school now and which will affect the later well-being of the school.²⁷

This willingness and capacity for work as well as for life is still essential in the faculty of Becket Academy in 1970-71. The workloads may be a bit lighter, but the spartan atmosphere, exemplified community living and sharing, self-knowledge, self-discipline, school spirit and religious pursuits are strongly evident. These qualities are kept alive in all areas: academic, sports, culture, conversation, dining hall, family living. There is enough choice so that each faculty member may emphasize the area he enjoys most and, in this way, help to create in every individual boy a true feeling of worth and potential to succeed.²⁸

The teachers, therefore, were and are the most important and vital part in the organization. Without the faculty the philosophy culminating in the objectives of the Academy could not exist.

Effects of the School's Objectives on Students and Faculty

In the previous section, the experiences leading to the inception of Becket Academy were related from the founder-headmaster's viewpoint. This section describes the effects that Becket's objectives had upon the students and faculty during the school year 1970-71.

²⁷William Breene, Jr., chairman, Connecticut Association of Independent Schools Evaluation Report (New Milford, Connecticut: Connecticut Association of Independent Schools, October, 1967), p. 19.

²⁸Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut, interviews with Joan Wolter, Christopher Warren, Father Ivan Ferguson and Reverend Charles Separk.

During a year of economic turmoil, internally and externally, in the independent school world, Becket Academy was able to sustain growth in its student body, its faculty, within its programs, and upon its physical plant, at a time when the headmaster, being on Sabbatical leave, had placed responsibility for the school in the hands of co-administrators.²⁹ While many educational institutions were operating at tremendous losses, Becket Academy functioned with a financial surplus.³⁰ Of course, the major actors and incidents of the previous six years of the Academy's development were a building process which enabled the school to sustain a successful seventh year. This "building process," however, did not occur without having negative as well as positive effects upon the people involved.³¹

Since the objectives of the Academy had evolved from the ideas and ideals of the headmaster-founder, particularly in the early years, his method of "facing problems head on" by hard work and sheer determination, combined with a sense of purpose, was an excellent philosophy for anyone willing to work twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. It was not, however, the kind of philosophy that tolerated idle conversation or excuses for a job not completed or poorly done. It was a "rough and tumble" philosophy, but it was practical because the school in 1964 was rough and tumble physically, and the students, generally potential

²⁹"Outlook for 1970-71," National Association of Independent Schools Bulletin (Boston: National Association of Independent Schools Press, February 1970), pp. 1-2.

³⁰See Appendix I.

³¹See Table 17 on Faculty Turnover, p. 121.
See Table 7 on Student Losses, p. 110.

school malcontents, welcomed an atmosphere created by raw courage and masculinity.³²

On their part, the faculty responded favorably to the school's objective during the first year, but since its demands occupied their every thought and action, it tended to draw the married faculty members away from their family responsibilities. The wives were not usually pleased with the arrangement and Becket Academy became a "jealous mistress." Consequently, at the end of the year, the school lost an excellent teacher in Gerald Flaherty because of family pressure.³³ To the present day, Becket's objectives have never rested easily with the faculty wives. Lurking behind almost every married person's reason for leaving the school is probably a dissatisfied wife.³⁴ The only single teacher, James McCann, also left after the 1964-65 school year, but for a different reason. During his stay at the Academy, Mr. McCann "found himself" and went directly to graduate school and completed his Ph.D. degree in demography at Brown University.³⁵

The lessons of courage, hard work, determination and frugal living which produced favorable results in the students and contributed to

³²Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut. Interviews with Mr. Christopher Warren, Mrs. Christopher Warren, Mr. Ronald Papp, July and August 1971.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut. Interviews with Mrs. Sidney DuPont, Mrs. Vincent Hunter, Mrs. Christopher Warren, Mrs. John Wolter, July and August 1971.

³⁵Telephone interview with James McCann, Providence, Rhode Island, July 1971.

the growth of the school during the first year gave impetus for beginning a second year, particularly when only one student out of those eligible to return did not enroll for the second year.³⁶ The success of the school's objectives in regard to the students, faculty and physical growth of the campus inspired the headmaster to continue it.

However, tragedies began to occur during the second school year of 1965-66. Problems incurred by an increase in student enrollment and five new staff members took its toll. The building program could not keep pace with the needs of a more sensitive faculty and their families, and the philosophy of hard work and determination was not able to offset the inconvenience of a lack of heat, hot water, textbooks and supplies, drafts, cramped living quarters, and the fantastic amount of mud and filth created by construction and inadequate septic systems.³⁷ Paul Papparella, a new faculty member and old friend of the headmaster, his family, and J. Junius Johnson and his family, all openly questioned the basic direction and possible success of the school with everyone except the headmaster and Mr. Warren. By the end of the year the school was on the verge of a "palace revolt." By keeping cool heads and assuming double and triple duty, the headmaster and Mr. Warren managed to prevent open rebellion and kept the morale of the student body high. Nevertheless, at

³⁶See Table 7 on Student Losses.

³⁷Personal interview with Mr. Christopher Warren, Becket Academy, East Haddam, Connecticut, August 1971. Personal interview with Mr. Timothy Martin, Amherst, Massachusetts, June 1971.

the end of the year, the school lost seven students and the entire faculty, with the exception of Mr. Warren.³⁸

Mr. Wolter's analysis of the situation at the time, and to this day, was that the faculty was "too soft" and of the kind who can best give only several good hours a day to the students, a certain number of days per year, on a definite schedule. However, despite these setbacks, the hard work on everyone's part paid off for, during the summer, the facilities were gradually repaired to catch up with needs.

The staff of 1966-1967 was in marked contrast to the defecting staff of the previous year. Besides the headmaster and Mr. Warren, the new staff consisted of Sidney DuPont, an experienced teacher and nationally rated athlete; his wife; Col. Victor King, a retired Army officer, West Point graduate and teacher; and Jan Lorenc, an experienced teacher and graduate architect. The other teachers added to the staff, with the exception of Adele Plude, were young single men who, Mr. Wolter felt, could best live under spartan conditions and cope with a difficult and rigorous schedule which included academic instruction, activities, maintenance and construction work.³⁹ Ivan Ferguson was also employed on a part time basis to work with the inexperienced teachers.⁴⁰

With improved conditions and a much heartier, mature and experienced staff, the end of the third year brought a measure of stability

³⁸See Table 7, p. 110.

³⁹"Employment Record Folders," East Haddam, Connecticut, Becket Academy, September, 1966.

⁴⁰Ivan Ferguson was a former Assistant Professor of Elementary Education at the Experimental School at New Paltz Teacher College, New Paltz, New York..

and a new thrust toward raising the quality of the facilities, especially for faculty members. This tempo of construction resulted in a marked increase in the number of students not returning to the school the following year (1967-1968).⁴¹ However, Mr. Wolter continued to push towards his goal of total plant and program development during the next three years despite the loss of as many as one-third of the potential returning students.⁴²

By 1968, as can be seen by the leveling of faculty turnover, a staff with an appreciable depth began to emerge.⁴³ Generally, it was a question of survival of the most adaptable, for both the teachers and the students. Of all the teachers who left the Academy during its existence, only one chose employment in another boarding school.⁴⁴ Without a doubt, the philosophy of Becket Academy took its heaviest toll upon the less hardy students during the three year period of 1966-1969.⁴⁵ Its effect on the student was really one of confrontation of the boy with himself, the school, or his parents, and sometimes all three together. There was no alternative for a student but to face his problems and get down to work, not only academically, but also physically by involvement in sports, maintenance and construction. There was no in-between. Boys either

⁴¹See Table 7, p. 110.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Table 17, p. 110.

⁴⁴This staff member remained at the other school for one year, and upon reaching age twenty-six, left to go to Law School.

⁴⁵See Table 7, p. 110.

loved it or hated it.⁴⁶ As far as the headmaster and the staff knows, to this day no boy has been "damaged" by the Academy's objectives which, in many respects, are a direct contradiction to modern day living, especially in suburbia. All excuses were stripped away, and pressure by faculty and peers was exacted on every student.

By 1969, however, the extreme rigors of the school's program began to mellow, particularly because the majority of the larger-scale projects were completed. At the same time, Mr. Wolter initiated a program of more intensive work with the student body and hired Jay Ashe, a trained psychiatric-social worker, to aid in the guidance program.⁴⁷ By modifying but not basically changing the school's objectives of applied industry, determination, loyalty and spartan living, the loss of students eligible to return declined to only six at the end of the 1969-1970 school year.⁴⁸ This was also reflected in the fact that the school made a conscious effort to keep the enrollments within reasonable limits. In contrast to the previous two years, only two students were lost during 1969-1970.⁴⁹

By comparison to the many negative aspects of the Academy's earlier years is the fact that in 1970-1971 seven staff members had been at

⁴⁶Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut. Interviews with Edward Peck, James Early, Duane Ianillilo, Jim Cunningham, students at the Academy during the periods 1964-1971.

⁴⁷Employment Records, Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut, September 1969.

⁴⁸See Table 7, p. 110.

⁴⁹Ibid.

the school for over three years, two members over five years, and one member over seven years.⁵⁰ Not only did these seven teachers withstand the rigors of the school year, but all worked at the Academy during the summer programs and four were instrumental in administering and creating the Becket Adventure trips and summer school programs. These teachers are of the variety who thrive on total dedication. It is from observing the daily performance of such teachers that students derive a tremendous amount of strength and insight into the values inherent in the school's objectives. Without this type of mature and dedicated individual, the Academy, the Becket Summer School, and the Becket Adventure Programs would not be what they are today.

In another direction, as the students performed well and the force of their dedication and hard work began to show tangible as well as intangible rewards, those faculty wives who had weathered years of storms, could admit to a certain pride in the industry and dedication of their husbands. Then, too, as faculty families grew older, both wives and husbands found that there truly is a quality injected into the spirit of people at Becket Academy.⁵¹ The school playground, indoor pool, gymnasium, panelled apartments, faculty houses and dining hall privileges, when seen in a practical perspective, total up to an advantageous way of life for bringing up a family.

For those faculty members who stood the "gaff" of the initial years of the school, a certain pride is shared which the headmaster feels

⁵⁰See Table 17, p. 121.

⁵¹Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut. Interviews with a group of faculty wives, May 1971.

has to do with the expenditure of energy in the form of "blood, sweat, tears" and worry. There is also pride in a job well done. Significant is the fact that the headmaster left the school at the end of six years for a Sabbatical and the staff was able to function on its own, disproving any feeling that Becket Academy was a "one-man show."⁵²

Summary

This chapter has shown how the objectives of education of Becket Academy evolved from the experience of Mr. Wolter and how his ideals and beliefs became the motivating force to found the school. The essential ingredients of the Academy's objectives of hard work, duty, self-discipline, loyalty, dedication, religion, and sense of purpose all contributed to motivate the faculty, their families, and the students to undergo considerable hardship and anguish in helping to found and build Becket Academy. Also analyzed is the faculty's attempt to educate the students and the students effort to educate themselves. The reader will find that the qualities emphasized in the Academy's objectives comprise not only a philosophy of education, but also a way of life.

⁵²Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut. Interviews with Trustee Mr. Michael Someck, Mr. Peter Kenney, Mr. Sidney DuPont, Mr. Patrick Scully.

C H A P T E R I V

LOCATION, CORPORATE STRUCTURE, EVALUATION,

ACCREDITATION 1964

In Chapter III, the founder's beliefs and values and how these relate to the founding, location, spartan atmosphere, development and program of Becket Academy has been described. It was also shown how the ideals of hard work, self-discipline, duty, dedication, loyalty and religion were significant factors determining individual and group effort in regard to the Academy's total program. Chapter IV will commence by relating background material prior to the incorporation of the school in 1964 and will describe the events leading to the selection of a proper location and the development of the corporate structure from 1964 to 1970. A review of the internal organization during the period 1964-1971 will be followed by the processes leading to State Approval, State Accreditation, and membership in the National Association of Independent Schools. The overall effect of these events on the major actors is also analyzed.

Background Material Prior to Incorporation

In 1962, when John Wolter took a position of assistant headmaster of St. Thomas More School in Colchester, Connecticut, he informed the Headmaster, James F. Hanrahan, of his desire to found and operate his own school. Since Mr. Wolter lacked the necessary financial resources for carrying out his ambition, Mr. Hanrahan offered this help and a verbal agreement was made in 1963 that the two men would be partners in a new school which would be incorporated for profit, and which would have a special program designed to offer intensive remedial work in reading,

English and mathematics to students who completed eight years of grammar school but who needed additional preparation prior to entrance into high school. The plan was to locate this new school on land adjacent to the St. Thomas More School,¹ but it turned out that the property was not available for purchase although literature had already been printed and the school's existence had been advertised.²

Instead, a twenty-acre estate in Lyme, Connecticut, known as the "Hand Estate," located eight miles from St. Thomas More School, became available and Mr. Hanrahan and Mr. Wolter successfully negotiated for this property, contingent upon the residents of Lyme voicing their approval concerning ". . . amending existing zoning to permit establishment of Public and Private Schools."³

On April 29, 1964, a record-breaking crowd attended the Planning and Zoning Commission's Hearing.⁴ Mr. Wolter, Mr. Hanrahan, and their attorney, Stephen O'Brien, were unaware that the townspeople were being misinformed that a Catholic school was to be founded. The New London daily newspaper, The Day, printed that "It was implied and not denied that Wolter wants to build and operate a private boarding school for sixth, seventh, and eighth grade boys."⁵ Further information, spread by

¹Becket Academy, brochure, Colchester, Connecticut, 1964.

²Becket Academy, conducted by Catholic Laymen (early advertising copy in Catholic Transcript, Providence Visitor, 1964).

³"Hearing Scheduled Next Week on School Zoning," The Day, New London (daily newspaper), Conn., April 22, 1964, p. 10.

⁴"Commission Votes Tomorrow on Amending Zoning Rules," The Day, New London (daily newspaper), Conn., April 30, 1964, p. 4.

⁵Ibid.

word of mouth, concerning such comments as "They'll build a great big cathedral right in the middle of town," and "Do you want to see a bunch of statues every time you drive down the road?" served to contribute to the resentment of the townspeople.⁶ It was opposition of this type that caused the citizenry to attend the meeting in such large numbers.

The meeting was opened by Captain Martinson who accused Mr. Wolter of writing "threatening" letters to his wife concerning an offer to purchase his home.⁷ Max Brevillier, the town clerk, summed up his feelings by saying, "We prohibit boarding houses and the only difference between a boarding house and a boarding school was the curriculum."⁸ Mr. Brevillier also indicated that school boys create "a lot of noise that interferes with mental processes. That's why we're so dumb."⁹

Throughout the meeting there were sly references to crookedness. Further arguments were fire hazards, invasion of privacy and traffic hazards that a school would create.¹⁰ Because neither Mr. Wolter nor his attorney were residents of the town, they were not allowed to address the gathering and clarify matters in defense of the proposed school. The citizens indicated their disapproval of the zoning change by a vote ratio of over three to one.¹¹ In a special meeting of their Lyme Planning and Zoning Commission, held on May 1, 1964, a petition to permit the zoning

⁶Lyme, Connecticut. Interviews with selected citizens, November 10, 1969, as quoted in "The Beginnings of Becket Academy," paper submitted by Vincent C. Hunter, Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut, January 26, 1970.

⁷The Day, April 30, 1964.

⁸Ibid., p. 4. ⁹Ibid. ¹⁰Ibid. ¹¹Ibid.

for private schools was turned down.¹² Thus it looked as though bigotry and ignorance had put an end to the existence of Becket Academy.

However, the next day, Louise Russell, a resident of Lyme, and the owner of the "Louise Russell Real Estate Agency," called James Hanrahan in Colchester to offer apologies and to inquire whether he and John Wolter would be interested in looking at 100 acres of land overlooking the Connecticut River in the rural town of East Haddam, approximately eight miles from the Lyme property.

The East Haddam property was by no means as readily adaptable to becoming a school as the "Hand Estate" in Lyme. It consisted of a farm house, a shed, a dilapidated pool and a turkey coop which had been converted into a summer boarding house. However, the price of the property was \$65,000 as opposed to the \$80,000 price for the "Hand Estate," and there was five times as much land. Like the Lyme location, the East Haddam property was available for a school only contingent on a zoning variance, but in marked contrast to the former experience, the hearing of the zoning board in East Haddam was attended by only one citizen outside the Board Members and this citizen favored the school. The variance was unanimously approved on May 25, 1964.¹³ Becket Academy finally had a location. With a home for the Academy assured, its operation was almost a reality.

¹²Lyme (Connecticut) Planning and Zoning Commission, Minutes of the Meeting, May 1, 1964.

¹³Letter from Zoning Board of Appeals, East Haddam, Connecticut, May 27, 1964.

The episode created by the prospects of locating the Academy in Lyme had a far-reaching effect on the staff and students. Besides making an inexperienced John Wolter keenly aware of intolerance, it also taught him to protect his flanks. The Becket Academy boys and staff, therefore, became active in town affairs and were willing helpers in everything from raking lawns and village cleanups to working on political campaigns. Mr. Wolter was appointed to the Democratic Town Committee and elected to the Board of Finance in East Haddam.¹⁴ The "concerns" of the people in Lyme were not evident in East Haddam, and Dr. Wilson Parkhill, in his Preliminary Report, made note of the excellent relations the Academy had with the town when he said:

Locally the school has won the respect and admiration of the people. . . . The goodwill which Mr. Wolter has been able to engender toward this school is a great factor in the success of this institution. . . .¹⁵

Becket Academy's public image has been important to the headmaster, so much so that faculty members who frequented or worked part-time at local "haunts" never remained at the Academy.¹⁶ While the students enjoy wide contact in the local town and communities, those who cannot conduct themselves properly are restricted in their movement.¹⁷

¹⁴Town election, November 8, 1968.

¹⁵Wilson Parkhill, "Preliminary Report," 1966, p. 4.

¹⁶John Wolter felt that teachers were professionals and that they should use discretion in "local" activities because the confidences of so many people and the reputation of the school depended on them.

¹⁷"Discipline Policy," Becket Academy, Inc. (unwritten).

Concern for public opinion also was influential in the unusual arrangements pertaining to the corporate status of Becket Academy, Inc. (non-profit) and Becket School, Inc. (profit). Mr. Wolter and Mr. Hanrahan, on being accepted into the town of East Haddam, emphasized that the school would pay taxes to the town. Although this was only a verbal agreement, Mr. Wolter felt he must honor it when he assumed full control of the Academy. In 1970, Becket School, Inc. paid over \$7,500 in taxes to the town of East Haddam.¹⁸ Becket Academy, however, does not pay taxes on any of its personal property or income. Although the cost in real estate taxes affects the school (these monies could be used for salaries or program), relations between the school and the town of East Haddam are enhanced.

Becket Academy, Inc., Profit, 1964

John Wolter and James Hanrahan formed the initial corporation titled Becket Academy, Inc. The Academy was incorporated under the Stock Corporation Act of the State of Connecticut to

conduct a private and independent boarding and day school for boys on the primary and secondary levels. Its purpose is to give the students a sound formal education with emphasis on a proper preparation for higher education, together with a thorough indoctrination and training in the principles and practices of good character, high moral standards and good and responsible citizenship. The corporation shall have all powers necessary or convenient to directly and indirectly effect the aforesaid business and purpose, all powers to do all things traditionally and customarily done in the operation of private primary and secondary schools and all powers given to stock corporations by the

¹⁸"Tax Bill," Becket School, Inc., from Town of East Haddam, Connecticut, July, 1971.

statutory law and by the common law of the State of Connecticut.¹⁹

This corporation, being a stock corporation, issued 100 shares of stock at a value of \$10.00 per share. James Hanrahan received fifty-one shares and John Wolter received forty-nine shares. This division of stock argeement gave Mr. Hanrahan legal control of the corporation.²⁰ The transaction was not agreeable to John Wolter, but considering the forementioned confusion as well as the late date, he did not press the issue.

The corporation then purchased the property on River Road in East Haddam, Connecticut from Michael Caltabiano and Paul Mancini for \$65,000. The Academy borrowed \$85,000 from the Norwich Savings Society for the purposes of mortgaging the River Road property and construction of a classroom building.²¹ At the first meeting of the Directors, John J. Wolter was elected President of the corporation and James Hanrahan was elected Secretary-Treasurer.²² The Corporate Records of Becket Academy do not detail changes in the corporate structure until the meeting of the directors on August 20, 1965. At this time, Attorney Stephen J. O'Brien resigned as a Director of the Corporation, and John J. Wolter

¹⁹"Certificate of Incorporation" (stock corporation), Becket Academy, Inc. (Montville, Connecticut, June 6, 1964).

²⁰"Subscription to Capital Stock," Becket School, Inc. Corporate Records, Colchester, Connecticut, June 10, 1964.

²¹"Record of First Meeting of Stockholders," Becket School, Inc. Corporate Records, Montville, Connecticut, June 11, 1964.

²²"Record of First Meeting of Directors," Becket School, Inc. Corporate Records, Montville, Connecticut, June 11, 1964.

nominated Joan Wolter to succeed Mr. O'Brien. This motion carried.²³

Sale of Hanrahan stock

During the first year and a half of the operation of Becket Academy, Mr. Hanrahan's interest in the venture waned because he was busy at his own school and the distance between the two schools hampered communication and understanding. Therefore, at the Board of Directors meeting of Becket Academy on February 1, 1966, Mr. Hanrahan

stated his desire to sell to the corporation fifty-one (51) shares of the capital stock of this corporation at a selling price of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000.00). Mr. Hanrahan also stated that he would accept a corporate note for the full selling price.

Accordingly it was unanimously voted that the corporation issue its promisory note for one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000.00) payable twenty-five years (25) from the date of execution thereof, together with the interest of six per cent (6%) annum.²⁴

Mr. Hanrahan resigned from the Corporation effective March 1, 1966, and James O. Reardan, the school's Corporate Counsel, succeeded him. John Wolter was elected Secretary of the Corporation.²⁵ This transaction left John J. Wolter the sole stockholder of the Corporation (Becket Academy). On February 11, the Corporate note of \$100,000.00 was amended to read that Becket Academy, Inc. " . . . shall not pay in any one calendar year an amount exceeding twenty percent (20%) of the face amount of this

²³"Becket Academy, East Haddam, Connecticut," Minutes of Director's Meeting, August 25, 1965, Becket School, Inc., Corporate Records. (Type-written.)

²⁴Becket Academy, East Haddam, Connecticut, "Minutes of the Director's Meeting," February 1, 1966, Becket School, Inc., Corporate Records.

²⁵Ibid.

note."²⁶ It was further agreed between James F. Hanrahan and John J. Wolter that neither would compete with each other in the State of Connecticut. James Hanrahan was not to own a proprietary interest in an institution organized for primary education, and John Wolter was not to own any proprietary interest in an institution for secondary education.²⁷

The partnership with James Hanrahan, like any partnership, had favorable and unfavorable aspects. It was favorable because (1) Becket Academy received the financial backing of James Hanrahan, (2) through Mr. Wolter's experience at St. Thomas More School he made valuable contacts in the areas of business, finances, and sources for students, and (3) he could trade on the name "St. Thomas More School" since it already existed and was gaining considerable respect.

On the debit side, the partnership restricted Mr. Wolter's freedom to make independent decisions and forced him to consult with a partner whose other interests made it difficult for him to give his undivided attention to the full situation. The greatest disadvantage of the partnership, however, was that its dissolution cost the Academy a corporate note of \$100,000 with an interest rate of six percent. Six thousand dollars of the Academy's income, which could be channeled into faculty salaries, scholarships and other internal school benefits, is paid yearly to James Hanrahan, and the debt of \$100,000 must be paid prior to 1991

²⁶Contract between Becket Academy and James Hanrahan, (Essex, Conn.: Gould, Sivin, Larsen, Reardon Law Firm, February 11, 1966).

²⁷"Non-Competition Agreement between John J. Wolter and James Hanrahan" (Hartford, Conn.: Robert A. Platt, attorney, February 11, 1966).

with monies that normally would go to the staff, students and program.²⁸ The only benefit derived directly from the Hanrahan transaction was financial and corporate independence, for in 1966 the Academy had no cash value; its assets were all mortgaged.²⁹

Becket Academy, Inc., Non-Profit, 1968

During the Board of Directors meeting on May 31, 1966, the possibility of the school phasing into a non-profit corporation status . . . discussed and . . . it was voted that . . . Attorney James D. Reardon investigate . . . the possibilities and desirabilities of transferring to a non-profit status. Mr. Reardon reported that such a transfer would be quite involved and complicated and would require considerable time and investigation before such a move could be recommended one way or another.³⁰

From June 1966, until the spring of 1968, James D. Reardon and William McCarry, the school's certified Public Accountant, investigated a change in Becket Academy's status to a non-profit corporation. Consultations in person and by phone were made with the Internal Revenue Service. It was decided at the Board of Directors Meeting on May 13, 1968, to change the name of Becket Academy, Inc. to Becket School, Inc.³¹ A new non-profit corporation was then to be formed which would be named "Becket Academy, Inc."³²

²⁸Contract between Becket Academy, Inc. and James Hanrahan (Essex, Connecticut: Gould, Sivin, Larsen, Reardon, February 11, 1966).

²⁹See Appendix I.

³⁰Becket Academy, East Haddam, Connecticut, Minutes of Meeting of Director, May 31, 1966, Becket School, Inc., Corporate Records.

³¹Becket Academy, East Haddam, Connecticut, Minutes of Meeting of Directors, May 13, 1968, Becket School, Inc., Corporate Records.

³²Ibid.

At this point in time, Becket School, Inc. owned all the real estate and personal property. Becket School, Inc. was and still is a stock corporation incorporated for profit, the sole owner of the assets being John J. Wolter.

At the Directors Meeting on May 13, 1968, a

Motion was duly made and seconded and unanimously carried, it was voted to transfer all of the activities of the operating school to the new non stock corporation which shall be named, BECKET ACADEMY, INC. . . . It was also moved and unanimously adopted that all the personal property presently owned by BECKET SCHOOL, INC. will be sold to BECKET ACADEMY, INC. . . . Upon motion duly made and carried and unanimously adopted, the President, John J. Wolter, was also authorized to negotiate and execute a lease with the new school known as BECKET ACADEMY, INC. . . . 33

The fact that Becket School, Inc. is owned entirely by John Wolter has had a negative effect at times on faculty morale, usually the result of an already "sour grapes" attitude. However, Mr. Wolter cannot transfer ownership of Becket School to Becket Academy without personally signing for and endorsing the school's mortgages and short term borrowing notes.³⁴ Nor can he sell or transfer the Becket School's assets without a long-term contract.³⁵ The only way this can be done is by a complete re-mortgaging. Mr. Wolter has offered the total assets of the school, \$1,097,000.00, for a price of \$300,000.00. However, financing

³³Ibid.

³⁴Personal interview with Mr. John Fay, Assistant Vice President, Connecticut Bank and Trust Company, Becket Academy, East Haddam, Connecticut, April, 1971.

³⁵Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut. Minutes of Meeting of Board of Trustees, May 8, 1971.

that would be satisfactory to the Trustees could not be arranged.³⁶

On May 31, 1968, the first Trustee meeting of Becket Academy, Inc. convened. Nominated and elected as Trustees were John J. Wolter, Joan M. Wolter, Bartholomew O'Rourke, Michael Someck, and F. Joseph O'Hara. Draft copies of the By-Laws for the non-profit Corporation, a draft lease of the Real Estate and a draft Employment Contract for the Headmaster were presented. Mr. Wolter was elected President, Mrs. Wolter, Secretary, and Mr. O'Rourke, Vice President of the Corporation.³⁷ At the Board of Trustees meeting on July 6, 1968, the Corporation By-Laws were unanimously accepted and a five-year contract for the Headmaster was voted on and approved.³⁸ During the September 28, 1968 meeting, the Lease of the Real Estate from Becket School, Inc. to Becket Academy, Inc. was discussed and approved, as was the purchase price for the personal property which was to be sold by Becket School to Becket Academy.³⁹

³⁶Letter from T. Mezzei, Jr., Assistant Vice President, Home National Bank & Trust Company, Meriden, Connecticut to John Wolter, April 29, 1971.

³⁷Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut, Meeting of the Board of Trustees, May 31, 1968, Becket Academy, Inc., Corporate Records.

³⁸"By-Laws," Becket Academy, Inc. (Essex, Connecticut: Gould, Sivin, Larsen and Reardon, June 8, 1968).

"Employment Agreement," Becket Academy, Inc. and John J. Wolter (Essex, Connecticut: Gould Sivin, Larsen and Reardon, June, 1968).

³⁹"Lease from Becket School, Inc. to Becket Academy, Inc. (Essex, Conn.: Gould, Sivin, Larsen and Reardon, July 6, 1968).

Becket Academy, East Haddam, Connecticut. Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting, September 28, 1968, Becket Academy Corporate Records.

The Board of Trustees of Becket Academy has had a good effect on the staff, particularly since the older staff members know the three trustee members, who were former parents, almost as well as the headmaster. The trustees, who are school men themselves, are held in high esteem by everyone at the Academy, and the existence of a non-profit board gives everyone the assurance that the school's finances and dealings in general have a scrutiny above John Wolter.⁴⁰ The trustees have also put budgetary demands on the headmaster and on the summer program directors, Mr. Warren, Mr. DuPont, and Mr. Hunter.

On July 30, 1968, Becket Academy was granted Tax Exempt Status from the State of Connecticut pursuant to the request of Attorney James D. Reardon on July 19, 1968.⁴¹ On August 16, 1968, Attorney Reardon requested that Becket Academy be exempt from Federal Income Tax, under Federal Income Tax, Section 501 (c.) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, and that Becket Academy be allowed to receive contributions that are deductible under Section 170 (c.) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.⁴² The Internal Revenue Service did not grant immediate Tax Exempt Status to Becket Academy, but rather allowed the Academy to operate as a

⁴⁰Mr. Warren was present when Kieren O'Rourke, son of Bartholomew O'Rourke and Tom O'Hara, son of Joseph O'Hara were at the school. Mr. Warren, Mr. Rist and Mr. DuPont were present during the stay of the two Riccotta boys, Michael and John. Langdon Rankin is the retired headmaster of the Eastwoods School, Long Island, New York and John Bigelow is presently the headmaster of Rectory School, Pomfret, Connecticut.

⁴¹Letter from John Sullivan, Tax Commissioner, State of Connecticut, Hartford, Connecticut, July 30, 1968.

⁴²Letter from James Reardon to Connecticut Association of Independent Schools, Essex, Connecticut, May 8, 1969.

non-profit corporation, and, in the winter of 1969, sent an Internal Revenue Agent to examine the personal records of John Wolter, Becket School, Becket Academy and (River Road Corporation). Upon satisfactory compliance with the Directives and Procedures of the Internal Revenue Service, Becket Academy was given its final tax exempt approval on May 25, 1970.⁴³ This status was retroactive to August 1968.

The intricate corporate transactions from the Wolter-Hanrahan partnership to Becket Academy, Inc. (profit) to Becket Academy, Inc. (non-profit) defied the comprehension of everyone except the school's lawyer and accountant who were regarded as legal and financial "wizards." Everyone concerned, therefore, breathed a collective sigh of relief when the school received a clean bill of health from the Internal Revenue examiner in 1969.⁴⁴

The diagram in Table 6 illustrates the corporate development of the Academy.

River Road Corporation

In June, 1968, a third corporation was formed, named River Road Corporation, for the purpose of operating the Becket Summer School and Becket Adventures. The stock of this corporation was owned solely by

⁴³Letter from William E. Williams, District Director Internal Revenue Service, Boston, Massachusetts, May 25, 1970.

⁴⁴At the end of the examiner's analysis of John Wolter, Becket School, Becket Academy and River Road Corporate Records, Mr. Charles Lempke of the New Britain Office of the Internal Revenue Service, recommended the Academy be granted tax exempt status. This was done in correspondence between him and the Internal Revenue Service in Washington, D.C.

TABLE 6

CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT DIAGRAM^a

January 1964 - June 1, 1964	John Wolter and James Hanrahan Mutual Partners	
June 1964 - February 1, 1966	Becket Academy, Inc. (incorporated for profit) James Hanrahan - 51 shares John Wolter - 49 shares	
February 1964 - May 13, 1968	Becket Academy, Inc. (for profit) John Wolter - 100 shares	
May 1968 June	Becket Academy, Inc. (Not for profit) Directed by Trustees Operates Academy Owns personal property of Academy	Becket School, Inc. (For profit) Land holding corporation of debts and mortgages of old Becket Academy, Inc. for profit
1969	Chapel	River Road Corporation (incorporated for profit) Summer School Becket Adventures
June 1, 1970	Becket Academy for Boys Summer School Becket Adventures (incorporated not for profit)	Becket School, Inc. Land holding corporation for profit. Holds mortgages and debts.

^aCompiled from Corporate Records: Becket Academy, Becket School, River Road Corporation.

John J. Wolter.⁴⁵ The corporation operated the Becket Summer School and Becket Adventures during the summers of 1968 and 1969. During the August 19, 1969 Trustee Meeting of Becket Academy, a proposal for the sale of Becket Summer School and Becket Adventures from River Road Corporation to Becket Academy was discussed. During the February 7, 1970 Trustee meeting " . . . a motion was made for the Academy to purchase the assets, rights to all names, goodwill of the River Road Corporation for \$62,000 payable before June 1, 1970."⁴⁶ The motion was passed.

As of June 1, 1970, Becket Academy, Inc. owned and operated all activities conducted on the grounds leased from Becket School, Inc. Becket School's sole function is that of a land holding corporation which pays taxes to the Town of East Haddam in addition to corporation taxes. As explained previously, Becket Academy, Inc., Becket Summer School, and Becket Adventures are tax exempt corporations and their personal property may not be taxed.

Complications and Advantages of Transactions

These transactions began prior to 1967 when John Wolter was twenty-six years old and without business and legal experience. The complications were such that legal and professional fees cost in excess of \$10,000. Because of his inexperience, lack of funds and acquaintances who were professional educators, Mr. Wolter was forced to proceed the way

⁴⁵"Certificate of Incorporation" (stock corporation), "River Road Corporation," Corporate Records, June 28, 1968.

⁴⁶Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut, Minutes of Meeting of Board of Trustees, Meeting of February 7, 1970. Becket Academy Corporate Records.

his counsel and accountant saw fit. The burdens he assumed, after purchasing James Hanrahan's stock, put the success or failure of the school squarely upon his shoulders. The delicate nature of the transactions made it inadvisable to share them with the faculty members and thereby cause uneasiness. Since the Trustee Meeting of February 7, 1970, the Board of Trustees has been attempting to arrange financing to purchase the assets of Becket School, Inc.⁴⁷

The transactions culminating in Becket Academy, Inc. operating as a corporation not for profit had many effects. The Academy was allowed to accept donations which were deductible by the donors on their Federal Income Tax Returns. On its part, the Academy did not have to pay a Connecticut Sales Tax or local Personal Property Taxes, and it became eligible to purchase Federal Surplus Property under Section 203 (J) of Public Law 152.⁴⁸ The Academy also qualified for reimbursement for its teachers under the National Defense Education Act of 1958 and various other Federal Laws such as Titles I, II, II, IV, V. The purchase of Federal Surplus Food also became available. Because of the Academy's non-profit status, it was eligible for State Aid from the State of Connecticut under the Secular Education Act.⁴⁹

⁴⁷Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut, Meetings of the Board of Trustees, February 7, 1970, May 9, 1970, February 27, 1971, May 8, 1971, Becket Academy Corporate Records.

⁴⁸Letter from Guido Pensiero, State of Connecticut, Department of Finance and Control of Purchasing Division, Newington, Connecticut, June 18, 1970.

⁴⁹"Contract for Purchase of Secular Educational Services Pursuant to Non-Public Schools," Secular Education Act (Sec. 10-281a et seq.), Connecticut State Board of Education, Hartford, Connecticut, June 17, 1970.

One of the immediate effects of Becket Academy becoming incorporated not for profit was the chapel fund raising drive. This building, which was the school's first luxury facility, was constructed entirely from donations as the money arrived. It was, therefore, a pleasure to build, and it turned out so well that the chapel has become the center of school life at the Academy. Besides possessing excellent acoustics, the coziness of the chapel has played a vital role in the daily life of the staff and students, instilling in them a sense of warmth and closeness as they gather for the morning assemblies and open "Town" meetings. As previously mentioned, only two students left during the year the chapel was built, and only six failed to return for the next year--a testimony to the new spirit of "togetherness" engendered by the daily assemblies and discussions in the chapel.⁵⁰ The school's relations with the town of East Haddam have also been strengthened, and no greater compliment could be paid to The Chapel of the Next Martyr when, in June 1971, a local family requested and was granted the use of the chapel for their daughter's wedding.⁵¹

Perhaps the greatest advantage in becoming a non-profit corporation is that it allows membership in various professional organizations not open to schools incorporated for profit. It also gave the Academy acceptance by professional educators and the public.

⁵⁰Table 7, p. 110.

⁵¹A friend of the Wolters', Miss Nancy Wolf, was married June 12, 1971 in the chapel.

Evaluation, Approval, Accreditation, Membership

For Becket Academy to be a success, it would have to be approved by the State of Connecticut. Mr. Wolter knew from experience that the State of Connecticut did not have the personnel to supervise private schools. In fact, in 1964, Franklyn E. Learned, Consultant for Private Schools for the entire State of Connecticut, also was in charge of approval for programs for the Veterans Administration⁵² and Drivers Education Programs. Mr. Wolter had met Mr. Learned while at St. Thomas More School and explained the Becket Academy idea to him. Therefore, while Mr. Learned knew of the existence of Becket Academy in its first two years, he did not choose to scrutinize it but rather required the Academy to comply only with minimum State requirements consisting of statutes regarding a school year of 180 days and keeping an attendance record. During these primary years (1964-1965), Becket Academy operated without approved status or accreditation.

The first full realization of the necessity for approval came early in September, 1964, when the Academy enrolled Joaquin Gomez, a boy from Nicaragua. In order for the Immigration and Naturalization Service of the United States Department of Justice to allow Joaquin to study at Becket, approval by the Department of Justice was necessitated. A copy of the Academy's application (Form J-17) and fourteen pages of evaluative material⁵³ were mailed on November 1, 1964 to the Hartford, Connecticut

⁵²Connecticut Education Directory, Connecticut State Department of Education, Hartford, Connecticut, 1963-64, p. 4.

⁵³John Wolter, "Self-Evaluation for Immigration Bureau," East Haddam, Connecticut, November 1, 1964.

office of the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Joaquin was allowed to remain at the Academy and on July 8, 1965, Becket Academy was granted formal approval by the District Director of Immigration Service.⁵⁴

The success of this initial encounter with evaluation proceedings encouraged the seeking of State Approval and Accreditation by the Connecticut Association of Independent Schools. Since scrutiny by professional educators of the Independent Schools would be different from that of the Department of Immigration, a definite plan was formulated during 1965-1966. First, pertinent information was obtained about the requirements of the National Association of Independent Schools, the Connecticut Association of Independent Schools, and the Laws Governing Private Schools of the State of Connecticut. Application was then made for listing of Becket Academy in Porter Sargent's Private Schools and Bunting & Lyons Private Independent Schools. Scrutiny by these two respected publications would point out weaknesses and strengths in the Academy's program. Bunting & Lyons, Inc. sent Peter Bunting to visit the Academy and collect data, and in 1966, the school obtained listings in both these distinguished publications.⁵⁵ In November, 1965, Mr. and Mrs. Wolter toured approximately twenty schools in New England to gather information and create educational contacts.

⁵⁴Letter from James Smith, United States Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Service, Hartford, Connecticut, July 8, 1965.

⁵⁵Private Schools, Boston, Massachusetts, Porter-Sargent, 1970, p. 36.

Private Independent Schools, Wallingford, Connecticut, Bunting & Lyon, 1970, p. 73.

During this time, Father Edward Dalton S.J., Director of Admissions at Cranwell School, Lenox, Massachusetts, befriended Becket Academy and gave constant counsel and advice. His help in regard to program and atmosphere was particularly important as his work involved the day and boarding elementary schools throughout the country.

Initial steps

By spring of 1966, Mr. Wolter was ready to take active steps toward obtaining approval and accreditation for Becket Academy. He decided to direct his efforts by first seeking the advice of James Bunting, President of Bunting & Lyons, whose offices are located in Wallingford, Connecticut, only a half hour from the Academy. James Bunting, through his publication, has had contact with almost all major private schools in the United States for over twenty-five years and was able, therefore, to guide Mr. Wolter in his quest for obtaining practical advice from qualified educational consultants. Mr. Bunting suggested two names: Francis Parkman and Dr. Wilson Parkhill. Mr. Wolter contacted Dr. Parkhill who accepted the assignment of evaluating Becket Academy.⁵⁶

Wilson Parkhill conducted his initial evaluation on October 3 and 4, 1966. His report, on the whole, was encouraging. He felt that the community relations in East Haddam were impressive, the faculty was satisfactory and willing to meet unusual demands, and the academic, athletic and activity programs were adequate. He suggested that the faculty class-loads were too heavy, the school records needed study and organization, a gymnasium should be built, and the school should study the seeking

⁵⁶Letter from Wilson Parkhill, Belgrade, Maine, May 8, 1966.

of a State Charter as a non-profit corporation. His report concluded with the comment that "Becket should continue to grow well under the present leadership."⁵⁷

Publicity

After his visit, Dr. Parkhill wrote several letters to key people to interest them in Becket Academy.

John J. Wolter . . . has built . . . Becket Academy in two years--a remarkable job. . . . I have told him about Eaglebrook, . . . I am hopeful he will have a chance to talk with you and see the operation on the Hill.⁵⁸

In a couple of years, a young man, named John J. Wolter, has created a good elementary boarding school. He has been looking for advice about his next moves as it is still a proprietary school. I hope you'll have a few minutes so I can bend your ear.⁵⁹

These letters and Dr. Parkhill's report and recommendations sparked immediate responses.

In January, 1967, Dr. Parkhill again visited the Academy and was able to see progress on his recommendations, including the building of a gymnasium and a classroom building.⁶⁰ Knowing Becket Academy's interest in becoming accredited by the Connecticut Association of Independent

⁵⁷Wilson Parkhill, "Preliminary Report on Becket Academy," Belgrade, Maine, October 11, 1966.

⁵⁸Letter to Stuart Chase, Headmaster, Eaglebrook School, Belgrade, Maine, October 11, 1966.

⁵⁹Letter to Cary Potter, President, National Association of Independent Schools, Belgrade, Maine, October 11, 1966.

⁶⁰Letter from Wilson Parkhill, Belgrade, Maine, January 21, 1967.

Schools, he wrote to the Executive Secretary, Nelson Farquhar, concerning the Academy's progress.

Starting with very little money, John Wolter has created a very good elementary boarding school in three years. Now, as you may have heard, he's making the shift to a non-profit basis with a Board of Trustees and will soon finish a gym-classroom building and an extra story on the present dormitory. At thirty he has done more than many of us at forty-five. I like his spirit and vision. This all leads up to the fact that the Connecticut Association will be evaluating the school at some point in the not too distant future.

With the present offerings at Becket, an excellent reading program, and a good activities program, I think that the school should pass. (Author's italics.)⁶¹

Now that Becket Academy had been properly introduced as a result of Dr. Parkhill's publicity, the time had arrived for seeking accreditation by the Connecticut Association of Independent Schools and approval by the State of Connecticut. It was decided to have these agencies conduct their evaluations simultaneously, to which they agreed.

Evaluations

In preparation for the coming evaluations on October 9-10, 1967, by these two agencies, the staff at Becket Academy conducted a self-evaluation during the summer and early fall months, to be given to the evaluators as background material.⁶² Every person associated with the Academy participated in this self-evaluation, including the headmaster, parents, students, clergy and businessmen. James McCarry, the C.P.A., and Attorney James Reardon were particularly helpful in the legal and

⁶¹Letter from Wilson Parkhill to Nelson Farquhar, Belgrade, Maine, May 23, 1967.

⁶²"Becket Academy, Self-Evaluation," compiled by John Wolter, East Haddam, Connecticut, September, 1967.

financial areas. In addition to John Shea, formerly of The Harvey School,⁶³ Edward Dalton, S.J., Wilson Parkhill and Peter Bunting assisted in the field of education. The mothers' committees met; faculty consultations on objectives ensued. The physical plant and staff were assessed and the activities program was studied. Separate reports were made on student morale, food services, and the Academy's athletic program.⁶⁴

The Connecticut Association of Independent Schools appointed a committee of four members to conduct the evaluations, and the State of Connecticut sent two evaluators.⁶⁵ The evaluations were conducted on October 9-10, 1967.

On January 2, 1968, the Academy was informed that it was voted institutional membership and accreditation in the Connecticut Association of Independent Schools on December 11, 1967. In the same letter, Nelson Farquhar stated that

. . . this should be the source of greatest satisfaction to you; probably never again will a school so new be granted membership in C.A.I.S. . . . It is a real tribute that the

⁶³John Shea was Senior at Harvey School for approximately twenty-five years and retired to Becket Academy to help straighten the program at Becket Academy. The Harvey School was a boarding school for boys in grades four through eight.

⁶⁴"Self-Evaluation," September, 1967.

⁶⁵Connecticut Association of Independent Schools: James K. Breene, Jr., chairman, Canterbury School, New Milford, Connecticut; Roy E. Norcross, Kingswood School, West Hartford, Connecticut; Douglas Reed, Fairfield Country Day, Fairfield, Connecticut; Langdon Rankin, retired headmaster, Eastwoods School, Essex, Connecticut.

State of Connecticut: Franklyn E. Learned, consultant private schools; Dr. Peter LaPriesti, consultant elementary education, State Department of Education.

visiting committee, the Commission, and the Executive Committee all, on considering the evidence, recommended institutional membership now.⁶⁶

On April 10, 1968, the State Board of Education, in regular session, voted that Becket Academy " . . . be approved for listing in the Educational Directory of Connecticut as an independent boarding school for boys, offering a program in grades 4-8. . . . "⁶⁷

Both Evaluation Committees submitted evaluation reports offering suggestions pertaining to the improvement of the school. Generally, it was the advice of the Connecticut Association of Independent School's Evaluating Committee to reduce faculty work schedules, provide outside faculty benefits, make more use of audio-visual aids, and change in part the system of discipline. The Academy's curriculum was considered generally good, but a lack of scientific material was noted. The faculty efforts were criticized only in the area of homework and composition correction. The activities program and the aplomb of the student body were commended. It was also suggested that the Academy make better use of the interpretation of Test Scores, improve student record keeping, particularly in the "follow up" of boys who leave the Academy. The physical plant, financial control and development were all considered excellent. In the overall appraisal of the school the Committee Report stated:

Becket unashamedly avows that it seeks "to promote scholastically sound and mature boys who are able to discipline themselves toward a full realization of their God-given potential."

⁶⁶Letter from Nelson Farquhar, Executive Secretary, Connecticut Association of Independent Schools, Bloomfield, Connecticut, January 2, 1968.

⁶⁷Letter from Franklyn Learned, State Department of Education, Hartford, Connecticut, April 17, 1968.

. . . John Wolter and his staff have give the committee the sure feeling that Becket is . . . effectively aimed in a meaningful direction, substantial progress has definitely been made toward realizable goals.⁶⁸

The Committee from the State Department of Education recommendations, though more formal in nature, were approximately the same as those of the Connecticut Association of Independent Schools.⁶⁹ By the following year, 1968, after study and trial, virtually every recommendation of either committee was either instituted or rejected as unsuitable for Becket Academy.

Since a successful evaluation by the Connecticut Association of Independent Schools is the criteria for membership in the National Association of Independent Schools, Mr. Farquhar was asked to inform this institution of Becket's membership in the Connecticut Association.⁷⁰ Mr. Farquhar complied with this request on April 4, 1969,⁷¹ and Becket proceeded to file the necessary papers of application to the Connecticut Association.

On April 22, 1969, Miss Adele Erwin, Staff Associate in charge of new members, wrote that "everything seems to be in order with your application. . . . We will be able to move ahead with your application

⁶⁸Report, Evaluation Committee of Becket Academy to Connecticut Association of Independent Schools, James Breene; chairman, November 15, 1967, pp. 1-16.

⁶⁹Letter from Franklyn Learned, April 17, 1968.

⁷⁰Fall Bulletin, Connecticut Association of Independent Schools, Bloomfield, Connecticut, 1967, p. 2.

⁷¹Letter from Nelson Farquhar, Executive Secretary, Connecticut Association of Independent Schools to National Association of Independent Schools, April 4, 1969.

for the June meeting of the Board."⁷² The Academy was granted membership five years after its initial incorporation, which is the minimum time allowed.⁷³

Having obtained approval by the State of Connecticut, accreditation by the Connecticut Association of Independent Schools, and membership in the National Association of Independent Schools, Becket Academy had achieved the highest status in the independent school world.

While the evaluations and accreditation procedures were being carried out by the agencies, Becket's headmaster continued with his own evaluative measures. He requested Dr. Parkhill to return to the Academy in April, 1969, to study and report on the curriculum and future needs of the school. Brother Albertus C.S.C., Superintendent of Schools for the Eastern Province of the Brothers of the Holy Cross, was also contacted and asked to evaluate the school. The recommendations of both Brother Albertus and Dr. Parkhill "struck the same note."⁷⁴ Mr. Wolter made a firm commitment to himself to cease building, politicking and supervising, and to concentrate now on investigating new educational trends.

In the spring of 1970, Mr. Wolter was granted a fellowship from the National Association of Independent Schools. This gave him the

⁷²Letter from Adele Erwin, National Association of Independent Schools, Boston, Massachusetts, April 22, 1969.

⁷³Information Bulletin National Association of Independent Schools, Boston, Massachusetts, 1968.

⁷⁴Letter from Brother Albertus, CSC (report and evaluation of academics), West Haven, Connecticut, May 23, 1969.

Wilson Parkhill, "Second Evaluation Report," Belgrade, Maine, May 11, 1969.

needed time and rest to conduct his own evaluation of the school he founded.

Effects of Evaluation and Accreditation

The headmaster's desire to gain approval, accreditation and outside evaluation had a beneficial effect on the entire staff and student body. Under the intense scrutiny of the first three years, Mr. Wolter and the faculty, besides building and maintaining the physical plant, made absolutely certain that the testing and academic programs were above average in quality and intensity. People were forever "popping in" and the faculty, constantly forewarned that evaluation leading to approval and accreditation was imminent, kept on their toes, thus insuring adequate programs for the students. On their part, the students basked in the attention bestowed on them by the visitors and, in time, a certain "Hawthorn" effect was created.⁷⁵

The headmaster, knowing that evaluation would include the physical plant, books, the library, etc., made special efforts to provide the teachers with materials from any available source. He would accept any donation, material or monetary, in those early days and became known as a horsetrader. Even today a donated chair to the Academy means more science equipment or library books, for it saves him the price of a chair, or he can sell or trade one of the older chairs. No donation, therefore, is not without a value to the Academy's growth.⁷⁶

⁷⁵Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut. Interviews with Christopher Warren, Sidney DuPont, Neal Rist, and Vincent Hunter.

⁷⁶For example, the Academy was donated a complete old chapel; while the benches were used in the school, the marble from the altar floor and

The evaluation of Dr. Wilson Parkhill helped the school to gain approval and accreditation early in its existence and gave a sense of satisfaction to everyone involved, encouraging them to greater effort. Another benefit derived from the evaluations of Dr. Parkhill and Brother Albertus, and the scrutiny of the State Department of Education, the State Department of Welfare, the State and local fire marshalls, the State Department of Health, and the Connecticut Association of Independent Schools, was that it brought Becket Academy to the forefront and earned it a place of prominence in the independent school world.⁷⁷ The evaluations also served to focus the energies of the school on the most pressing needs. It also brought about a habit of self-criticism and self-evaluation among the faculty, and assured the parents that the school was doing everything in its power to seek excellence in its progress.

In later years, the evaluations began to talk more about program and the quality of teaching than in the previous years when the emphasis was on the glaring lacks in buildings and equipment.⁷⁸

The only negative aspect to the evaluations was that they tended to be disruptive to the normal atmosphere of the school. Then, too, the

walls was traded for a bell for the top of the chapel. Also the Academy was donated a complete library of books which the school sold in part to bookdealers and traded adult books for children's books.

⁷⁷There is no other form of approval, membership or accreditation available to the Academy which could enhance its status.

⁷⁸Letter from Brother Albertus, West Haven, Connecticut, May 23, 1969.

Wilson Parkhill, "Informal Report on Becket Academy," Belgrade, Maine, May 11, 1969.

understanding and generosity of the evaluators tended to infuse the faculty and headmaster with a sense of over-confidence when they were given too much credit for work that perhaps was not quite up to standard. Also, frequent evaluations tend to make the faculty and student body "evaluation-proof" so that unconsciously they seem to be able to glide through them with a minimum of effort, receiving glowing reports. The result can be a certain contempt for evaluators. Such feelings on the part of the staff and students eventually decided the headmaster to declare a moratorium on evaluations until the faculty requested one or the Connecticut Association of Independent Schools required one.⁷⁹

The most obvious advantage of the Academy's status of approval and accreditation, and its listing in various publications, was that it meant more contacts and, therefore, more students. Parents who "knew," and independent schools who referred students, looked for high accreditation and approval. The number of students referred by these schools increased greatly once the Academy was approved and accredited.⁸⁰

Approval and accreditation also gave the faculty at Becket Academy eligibility for enrollment in various workshops conducted by the National Association of Independent Schools and enabled them to meet with the faculties of schools similar to Becket.⁸¹

⁷⁹Connecticut Association of Independent Schools requires yearly reports the first three years a school is a member and then an evaluation every five years.

⁸⁰See Table 13, p. 116.

⁸¹Mr. Wolter was chosen to attend "Headmasters' Conference," Exeter School, Exeter, New Hampshire, July 2-10, 1969. Additionally Mr. Wolter attended "Annual Giving and Fund-Raising Workshops," and the faculty attended the "Curriculum Workshops."

With accreditation and approval, the Academy also became eligible for enrollment in the Independent School Athletic League, enabling the students to compete in sports with schools similar in size and athletic philosophy.⁸² This competition makes it possible for the students to see other schools like Becket Academy. Speaking with the boys there helps to bring about a cross-fertilization of ideas.

The evaluations and these expanded contacts made the faculty more aware of their needs, desires, and rights--all of which fostered more lively discussion about the campus and in faculty meetings.

Summary

An analysis of Chapter IV reveals that various factors contribute to the finding of a suitable location for a school. It was shown how many competing and contradictory forces are at work to impede the purchase of real estate and to deny permission to operate a school. This chapter also points up the fact that the complications of various corporate structures and partnerships, as well as the advantages and disadvantages, should be thoroughly investigated before one attempts the process of founding a school. By the same token, anyone starting a new venture in education should understand the path to approval, accreditation and recognition by one's peers in order that time and effort is not spent needlessly. Above all, one should realize that many intricate processes are operating side by side as one attempts to bring various forces and phenomenon together as a unified whole.

⁸²Connecticut Independent Schools Athletic League, Hamden, Connecticut, Minutes of Meeting, March 1971.

CHAPTER V

THE DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH OF BECKET ACADEMY

In the previous chapter, the growth and development of Becket Academy prior to locating its campus in East Haddam, Connecticut, has been related, along with a detailed account of the various transactions and incidents affecting this growth. A review has also been made of the major actors involved in the development of the school and in the gaining of approval and accreditation. This chapter will attempt to give an understanding of the development of the Academy by an examination of four factors: the growth of the numbers of the faculty and their families; the increase of student enrollment; the construction, renovation and improvement of buildings and grounds; and the finances which enable the other three factors to exist. These four factors in the growth of Becket Academy are interrelated. In the following section is described the development of the faculty and student enrollment.

Faculty and Student Development

In 1964, in addition to the headmaster, his wife and three children, the faculty consisted of two married teachers, one couple with two children, the other without children; and a single man. Because of the nature of a boarding school, all members of the faculty resided on the campus to provide adequate supervision and guidance to the students.¹

By contrast, in the school year 1970-71, in addition to the headmaster, his wife and five children, there are fourteen faculty members,

¹Employment Record Book (East Haddam, Connecticut: Becket Academy, Inc., 1964-65).

thirteen of whom resided on campus. Of these thirteen, eight are married with a combined total of eight children.² The increased numbers of faculty members were in relation to the increase in student enrollment.

Table 7 illustrates the growth of the enrollment of Becket Academy from forty-two students at the end of the first year (1964) to a peak of 132 students at the end of the 1967-1968 school year.

In the 1969-1970 and 1970-1971 school years, student enrollment declined to 109 and 110 students respectively, and the faculty-student ratio steadily decreased from a high in 1964 of one teacher to every fourteen students to a low of one teacher to every 7.9 students in 1970-1971. This drop in student-teacher ratio was caused by hiring more teachers, necessitated by the expansion of the school program in all areas, particularly in sports and activities at the beginning of the third year, and steady improvement in instruction.

The overall drop in student enrollment from the 1968-1969 year end figure of 128 was caused by two factors: (1) a decline in the number of new applicants, and (2) a less aggressive admissions policy, due to the fact that faculty apartments were expanded to include many former student rooms, thereby reducing the dormitory capacity of approximately 130 students to a more realistic capacity of approximately 100 students. As the 1967-1968 and 1968-1969 school years indicated to Mr. Wolter and

²Employment Record Book (East Haddam, Connecticut: Becket Academy, Inc., 5-66).

TABLE 7

STUDENT ENROLLMENT AND FACULTY ANALYSIS BY YEAR^a

	64-65	65-66	66-67	67-68	68-69	69-70	70-71
<u>Students</u>							
Students starting school year	35	66	97	120	122	95	116
New students during school year	11	14	22	17	16	16	7
Students lost during school year	4	2	16	5	10	2	13
Students finishing school year	42	78	103	132	128	109	110
Students graduating	18	30	39	39	52	48	43
Students returning for next year	23	41	40	66	52	55	
Students not returning	1	7	24	27	24	6	
New students by September of year charted		43	56	80	56	43	61
<u>Faculty</u>							
Number of faculty	3	6	10	13	16	12	14
Student/faculty ratio	1/14	1/13	1/10.3	1/10.2	1/8	1/9.1	1/7.9
Faculty lost from previous year	2/3	5/6	5/10	4/13	4/16	4/12	3/14

^aCompiled from yearly enrollment chart, graduation records, student records, and faculty employment records.

the staff, the true capacity of Becket Academy was considerably less than the 130 student range.³

As noted in Table 7, only two students were lost during the school year 1969-1970, in contrast to a loss of ten students the year previously. The loss of thirteen students during the 1970-1971 school year, in ten cases can be attributed directly to financial problems caused by the current national financial circumstances.⁴ The ratio of faculty leaving each year has achieved a degree of stability since the end of the 1966-1967 school year. This can be attributed to the reduction in the student-faculty ratio and improved working conditions with the construction of faculty apartments and the gymnasium-classroom building.⁵

Students

The personal data on new students enrolled, as indicated in Table 8, reveals an overwhelming number of Roman Catholics, due to the nature of the school's objectives.⁶ Consistently, the student body has been predominately Caucasian and does not reflect a true percentage of

³As noted in Table 7, a total of thirty-one students were lost during the school years from 1966-1969, and an average of twenty-five did not return to school from each of these three years for the following year.

⁴Analysis of student records, unpaid bills, and interview with Mr. Warren, Becket Academy, East Haddam, Connecticut, June 31, 1971.

⁵Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut. Interviews with Gilbert Morneault, Neal Rist, Sidney DuPont, Curt Hunter, July 1971.

⁶Becket Academy, brochure, East Haddam, Connecticut, 1970, p. 1.

TABLE 8

PERSONAL DATA ON NEW STUDENTS ENROLLED^a

	64-65	65-66	66-67	67-68	68-69	69-70	70-71	Total
Religion								
Roman Catholic	42	48	61	76	48	45	42	362
Episcopalian		3	4	4	8	2	2	23
Protestant	3	5	6	7	11	10	4	46
Jewish			5	6	5	2	1	19
Other	1							1
Unknown		1	2	2				5
Race								
Caucasian	46	55	76	94	70	50	47	448
Negro		2	2	1	1	8	5	19
Other					1	1		2
Foreign students	3	1		1		2	1	8
Adopted	2	3	4	5	1	2	2	19
Divorced	4	13	18	14	10	18	18	95
Deceased Parent								
Mother		1	1	2	3	3	6	16
Father	1	1	3	2	3	1	2	13

^aCompiled from Student Permanent Records, Applications, yearly pictures and conferences between Mr. Warren and Mr. Wolter.

minority group representation. Significant numbers of the total 470 students enrolled over the years were either adopted, had at least one deceased parent, or were the product of a divorced family.

Table 9 shows the grades by year into which new students were enrolled. On the average, most students enrolled in the seventh grade, followed by the eighth grade, the sixth, fifth, and lastly, the fourth grade.

TABLE 9

CHART OF GRADE ENROLLED BY NEW STUDENTS^a

	64-65	65-66	66-67	67-68	68-69	69-70	70-71
Grade 4	1	5	5	3	3	3	4
5	4	9	11	11	8	7	12
6	6	11	15	18	17	8	5
7	14	16	26	41	28	24	19
8	21	16	21	22	16	17	11
9							1
Total	46	57	78	95	72	59	52

^aCompiled from Applications, Student Personnel Records and Annual School Photographs.

Table 10 reveals that most parents were undecided about high school plans at the time of the student's enrollment.

TABLE 10

PARENTAL HIGH SCHOOL PLANS FOR NEW STUDENTS^a

	64-65	65-66	66-67	67-68	68-69	69-70	70-71	Total
Public	1	3	10	3	10	8	10	45
Diocesan								
Catholic	2	3	8	8	7	4	4	36
Private	7	3	5	3	6	9	1	34
Private								
Catholic	11	10	18	27	7	13	5	
Undecided	25	38	37	54	42	25	32	

^aCompiled from analysis of applications.

The geographic distribution of the student body, as diagramed in Table 11, shows that the majority of the students came from the State of

Connecticut, followed by New York, Massachusetts, Long Island and Rhode Island.

TABLE 11

NEW STUDENT RESIDENCE BY STATE AND COUNTRY^a

	64-65	65-66	66-67	67-68	68-69	69-70	70-71
Connecticut	25	21	39	32	28	29	26
Rhode Island	6	4	6	10	2	2	1
Vermont							1
New Jersey	1	3	3	3	2	5	6
Massachusetts	3	4	3	17	10	4	1
New York	3	15	17	15	19	11	16
Long Island	4	8	8	11	6	3	
Pennsylvania	2		1		2	2	
Ohio			1		1		2
Virginia		1				1	
Michigan				2			
New Hampshire				2			
Maine				1			
Canada		1					
Virgin Islands				1	2		
Foreign Country	2			1		2	1

^aCompiled from analysis of student applications.

The occupations of the parents covered a full range of employment illustrating no particular pattern, as shown in Table 12.

While it is not known why many of the students came to enroll at Becket Academy, it can be seen from Table 13 that friends and other private schools played a particularly important part in student referral. Other identifiable areas of student sources over the years is also indicated in Table 13.

The majority of students have always been financed by their own families. However, the 1966-1967 school year offered a significant number

TABLE 12

PARENTS' OCCUPATIONS BY YEAR^a

	64-65	65-66	66-67	67-68	68-69	69-70	70-71
Professional	8	6	13	13	12	13	10
Self-employed	7	10	11	9	9	6	3
Finance	2	4	2	7	4	3	3
Semi-skilled labor	2	3	1	5	3	4	4
Skilled labor		6	4	3	4	3	6
Sales	4	5	9	16	12	7	4
Government	2	2	3	7	4	2	4
Executives	5	10	18	22	15	14	10
Unknown	16	11	27	16	9	17	8

Key:

Professional: individuals with advanced degrees in medicine, English, chemistry, education, law, accounting, editor.
 Self-employed: store owner, author, artist, entertainer.
 Finance: banker, investor, stockbroker.
 Semi-skilled labor: factory workers, machine operators, equipment operators.
 Skilled labor: construction, plumbing, electrician, carpentry.
 Sales: real estate, salesmen.
 Executive: individuals in middle or upper management or large companies, i.e. advertising.
 Government: Armed services, postal employees, foreign service, local and state government.

^aCompiled from applications.

of partial scholarships and enrolled boys under various state programs. Table 14 clearly indicates the increase in the number of state supported children enrolled at Becket Academy.

Especially important are the number of students receiving state support in the years 1969-1970, 1970-1971. This is particularly significant as these two years have been accompanied by a decline in requests for school literature, as shown in Table 15, and by a decrease in applications as indicated in Table 16 which also shows the spread of applications

TABLE 13

NEW STUDENTS - REFERRAL CHARTS BY YEAR^a

	64-65	65-66	66-67	67-68	68-69	69-70	70-71
Friends	10	16	16	10	17	15	11
Private schools	8	7	10	12	6	5	8
Advisory service		1	5	12	4	4	4
Clergy	4	3	5	3	5	1	6
Catholic paper	1	1	8	12	1	3	2
Education							
Counselor		1		5	6		3
Porter-Sargent			4	4	1	2	1
Catholic School							
Guide		1	2	4	2	1	
New York Times	1	1		3	2		2
Psychologist				2	3	3	
Parochial		1	2				5
Grammar school							
Bunting & Lyon			1	2	1	3	1
Public school and			2			2	2
guidance						20	7
Unknown	22	25	33	26	24		

^aCompiled from applications.

TABLE 14

TOTAL STUDENTS SUPPORTED BY STATE, FOUNDATION, SCHOLARSHIP^a

	64-65	65-66	66-67	67-68	68-69	69-70	70-71
State							
Full		2	6		7	11	21
Partial						1	2
Foundation							
Full					1	3	2
Partial							1
Partial Scholar-							
ship		2	9	10	14	10	7

^aCompiled from Financial Record Book and Student Applications, Files and Scholarship Application Forms.

TABLE 15

CHART OF SCHOOL LITERATURE REQUESTS BY MONTH AND YEAR^a

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	
64-65 ^b													
65-66													
66-67 ^c	23*	45*	52*	78*	124*	110*	51*	54*	61*	54*	44*	43*	739*
67-68	62*	52*	49	71	53	70	58	64	24	30	45	30	608
68-69	40	21	35	41	55	54	46	40	42	31	29	25	429
69-70	34	28	37	32	46	55	44	33	33	29	19	14	404
70-71	20	24	29	32	41	39							

^aCompiled from brochure record book.^bNo records kept.^cFigures from January 1966 to March 1967 include Summer School requests.

TABLE 16

CHART OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BY MONTH AND YEAR^a

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	
64-65	(2) ^b	(5)	3 (2)	3	7	3	6	9	4		(2)	3	35 (11)
65-66	(4)	(3)	(4)	1 (1)	7 (1)	10	3	15	7	(1)			43 (14)
66-67	(3)	(5)	2 (2)	1 (1)	7	6	11	15	14 (1)	(4)	(5)	(1)	56 (22)
67-68	3 (4)	4 (1)	4 (1)	4	9	9	5	27	15	(2)	(2)	(5)	80 (15)
68-69	(1)		7 (2)	6	5 (1)	8	2	20	9 (1)	(2)	(6)	(3)	56 (16)
69-70	(5)	2	3 (4)	3	8	6	5	13	3	(1)	(3)	(3)	43 (16)
70-71	1	3 (3)	2	6	5	10	8	10	3		(1)		48 (4)
71-72		3	2	3	2	7							

^aCompiled from application record book referring only to students who actually enrolled.

^b() Students enrolled during the school year.

received. It should be noted that the most active month has traditionally been the month of August, and that considerable activity can occur as late as September. Table 16 also indicates the number of students enrolled during the year. These high numbers are significant because they affected planning in regard to the hiring of faculty, purchasing of materials, and plans for projects.

As indicated in Appendix I, various amounts of monies have been spent on advertising the school.⁷

The greatest thrust in the procurement of students has been through the efforts of Mr. Wolter. Prior to the opening of the school in 1964, Mr. and Mrs. Wolter wrote over 600 personal letters, and Mr. Wolter visited over 200 schools in addition to direct mailing to clergy and Catholic schools in Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and New York.⁸ Over the years, psychologists, private schools, parents, friends and alumni have been added to the school's mailing list. Mr. Wolter has also spent considerable time with the State Departments of Welfare in Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey and Rhode Island.⁹

The admissions policy has remained consistently liberal and aggressive from the inception of the school in 1964 until the present. However, an important factor in the school's admissions policy is that

⁷"Schedule of Advertising" (Philadelphia: N. W. Ayer & Son, 1967).

"Advertising Schedule" (Boston: Vincent Curtis Company, 1969).

⁸Personal interview with Joan Wolter, East Haddam, Connecticut, August 1971.

⁹"Becket Academy Mailing List," compiled by Diana Schleiss, East Haddam, Connecticut, 1966-1971.

NO student will be accepted without a personal interview, and if the student indicates he does not wish to attend Becket Academy.

Faculty

As indicated in Table 17, the faculty at Becket Academy generally came to the school without, or with less than, three years teaching experience. Those who came to the Academy with five or more years of experience did not remain at the school more than two years, with the exception of Jan Lorenc. The typical teacher came to the school in his early twenties and remained an average of two years. The ages, teaching experience, and pattern of employment is also illustrated in Table 17.

These teachers came to the Academy for various reasons which have been categorized in Table 18. Their reasons ranged from a sincere interest and understanding of the school's program to outright draft evasion. Some teachers came because they had friends at the school, or because it was an available job in education.

Almost all the teachers held the Bachelor's Degree, and in each succeeding year, more teachers had the Master's Degree or significant advanced study. Approximately 30-45 percent of the teachers hold State Certification or are eligible for it. These figures are reflected in Table 19.

Of the teachers leaving the school during its seven years existence, most have left for a better position in education. Others left for various reasons, from leaving education, family pressure, or disillusionment. An indication of this sentiment can be seen in Table 20.

TABLE 17

YEAR FACULTY CAME AND DURATION OF STAY

Age When Came	Years Teaching Experience		64-65	65-66	66-67	67-68	68-69	69-70	70-71
24	1	James McCann	----						
27	2	Gerald Flaherty	----						
24	3	Christopher Warren	----						
58	10	Alice Gaylor		----					
28	-	J. Junius Johnson		----					
22	-	Timothy Martin		----					
29	7	Paul Papparella		----					
26	-	Angus Wootton		----					
25	2	Sidney DuPont			----				
22	-	John Clark			----				
57	10	Victor King			----				
40	1	Jan Lorenc			----				
41	-	Adele Plude			----				
22	-	Neal Rist			----				
22	-	Michael Shea			----				
	-	James Woods			----				
43	5	Joseph Daltoli				----			
25	-	John Kennedy				----			
24	-	John Landers				----			
21	-	Harry Ludwig				----			
67	40	John Shea				----			
32	2	Marion Sperry				----			
23	-	Shaun Lavin				----			

TABLE 17--CONTINUED

Age When Came	Years Teaching Experience		64-65	65-66	66-67	67-68	68-69	69-70	70-71
24	-	Curtis Hunter					-	-	-
23	-	Neal Muckenhaupt					-	-	-
22	-	Alex Sulzulyki					-	-	-
21	-	Harold beWaldolf					-	-	-
25	-	Gilbert Morneauult					-	-	-
24	-	Pat Scully					-	-	-
29	5	Ted Benton					-	-	-
36	3	Joseph LaFrance					-	-	-
22	-	Harry Bosco					-	-	-
23	1	Robert Morahan					-	-	-
37	-	Peter Kenney					-	-	-
23	-	William Sweeney					-	-	-
32	12	Ivan Ferguson			-		-	-	-
34	3	Charles Separk			-		-	-	-

TABLE 18

REASON FOR COMING TO BECKET ACADEMY -
BY YEAR EMPLOYED^a

	64-65	65-66	66-67	67-68	68-69	69-70	70-71
Sincere interest	2	1	2	3	4	1	5
Draft evasion (or other)			2	3	2		
Available job in education		3	2				2
Friends	1			1			
Unknown		1	2				

^aCompiled from employment record and personal interview.

TABLE 19

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF TEACHERS
BY YEAR OF EMPLOYMENT^a

	64-65	65-66	66-67	67-68	68-69	69-70	70-71
Education							
No Degree			1				1
Bachelors Degree	3	6	8	13	12	11	13
Masters Degree		2	1	1	2	3	4
Advanced Study			1	1	1	1	4
Certification	2	4	4	6	5	4	5

^aCompiled from employment records and interviews.

The statistics on the faculty personal data, as related in Table 21, show that, like the student body, most of the teachers are Roman Catholics, the rest being Protestant. Only two divorced faculty members were ever hired, and the number of single teachers hired initially at the beginning of each school year was greater than those teachers who

TABLE 20

REASONS FOR LEAVING THE ACADEMY - YEAR LEFT^a

	64-65	65-66	66-67	67-68	68-69	69-70	70-71
Graduate school	1					1	
Advancement in education		3	2	1	1		
Disillusion		2					
Family pressure	1			1		1	
To enter business field						2	
Dismissed				2	1		
Other					1		

^aCompiled from employment record and personal interview.

TABLE 21

PERSONAL DATA ON FACULTY YEAR ENTERED^a

	64-65	65-66	66-67	67-68	68-69	69-70	70-71
Religion							
Catholic	3	3	6	6	5	1	5
Protestant		2	2	1	1		2
Other							
Marital Status							
Single	1	2	3	5	6		3
Married	2	2	4	2		1	4
Divorced		1	1				
Widowed							
Type of School							
Sectarian	3	2	4	4	4	1	2
Non-Sectarian		3	3	3	2		5
No college			1				

^aCompiled from employment records and personal interviews.

were married. By a slim margin, most faculty members had attended sectarian colleges. Only one teacher hired had never attended college.

The faculty was recruited generally by word of mouth. Of the 37 teachers who have been employed at Becket Academy, 25 were known directly either by Mr. Wolter or by another faculty member prior to enrollment. Of the remainder, nine came to the school through employment agencies and three because of direct application. With the exception of three female teachers, the faculty has traditionally been comprised of male teachers.¹⁰

The salaries at the Academy have always been competitive with other independent schools, and follow the median salary scales found in the Annual N.A.I.S. Study on Faculty Salaries and Benefits.¹¹ The faculty has been employed under workmen's compensation and Social Security. A group medical plan was introduced in 1965. This program was expanded to include life insurance and major medical, and beginning in 1970 all insurance benefits were paid entirely by the Academy.¹² In 1966, the school began paying for college or graduate credit courses and workshops upon the request of the teacher. Housing, utilities, food, and use of the entire school facility have always been provided

¹⁰Employment Record Book (East Haddam, Connecticut: Becket Academy, Inc., 1962-1963).

¹¹The National Association of Independent Schools publishes an annual Report on Administrative Faculty Salaries. These reports are available at the National Association of Independent Schools office, Boston, Massachusetts.

¹²Payroll Record Books, Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut, 1965, 1970.

by the Academy to those living in school-owned or controlled real estate.¹³

Physical Development

Throughout the seven year history of Becket Academy there has been constant land improvement, renovation, construction, and a process of beautification. In the summer of 1964, John Wolter and James Hanrahan bought 100 acres of woods and farmland, and a half acre pond. The farmhouse on the property was built sometime prior to 1840. The "boarding house," converted from the turkey coop, was an excellent example of the need for building codes.¹⁴ A shed which previously housed turkeys completed the buildings.

Construction during first year, 1964-1965

The immediate project was to build Founders Hall, the original classroom building. Additionally, the Boarding House, renamed Thomas More Hall, had to be winterized, have a heating system installed, be painted and repaired, and the plumbing completely overhauled. The farmhouse had to be converted into two apartments, and a home had to be constructed for the headmaster and his family. This work, by necessity, had to be completed by the opening day of September 15, 1964.¹⁵

¹³"Employment Contract, Becket Academy, Inc.," East Haddam, Connecticut (sample, see 1969).

¹⁴At time of purchase, the septic system for the "boarding house" was located under the building, and the lower floor was below grade causing flooding during rain, in addition to faulty wiring. All of these conditions had to be repaired during the first year.

¹⁵Joan M. Wolter, "Pictorial History of Becket Academy, Book 1," 1964-1967, East Haddam, Connecticut, pp. 1-2.

At best, all these projects were only partially completed by this deadline, and were in constant need of repair and finishing. The headmaster's home was not livable until November, and the other buildings were damp, cramped, and "rough." The heating systems and much of the building materials were purchased used from junkyards in Plainfield, Connecticut. The situation was so impossible that everyone, students, staff and friends, were faced by a sense of charity to work together. A spirit of pioneering and adventure emerged in almost everyone. Those individuals who could not tolerate long hours, unrelenting physical and mental work, in the shadow of imminent failure, became burdens to the adventuresome and energetic workers.¹⁶

To compensate for a lack of recreational facilities and club activities, John Wolter organized the students and faculty into maintenance and construction brigades so that the work could be completed and idle minds could be given a sense of purpose and accomplishment. With the exception of a small sports program, almost all non-academic time was spent on beautifying and cleaning the grounds and buildings, and in converting the old turkey coop into a combination recreation hall and gymnasium. During that first year, not one faculty member or student had construction skills, but with the advice of a friend, Peter Gural, plumbing, carpentry, wiring, painting and wallpapering were accomplished. Work such as masonry was supervised directly by John Wolter, and workmen were hired by the hour or on a per unit cost. Because money was not available, Mr. Wolter developed a sixth sense concerning finances and an

¹⁶Ibid., p. 7.

ability to deal with salesmen and construction workers. The desperate-ness of the situation made the gambles necessary. Without these gambles, nothing would be obtained. Mr. Wolter had no qualms about asking anyone for anything. His only repayment was to offer a promisory note or a future favor in return. He was never denied, and acts of charity abounded. So great was the help received that first year from friends, acquaintances and tradesmen, and so complimentary was the response of the parents that John Wolter felt the school would surely prosper.¹⁷

The construction of the first floor of a dormitory-classroom, to be called Baruch Hall, necessitated another gamble. Using the faith of tradesmen and suppliers, Mr. Wolter started construction in the spring of 1965 and almost completed it by the advent of the 1965-1966 school year. This building was erected without construction plans and was designed to be eventually three stories with an addition for faculty apartments. Upon completion, it would contain over 20,000 square feet.¹⁸

Development in 1965-1966

The school began its second year with Baruch Hall occupied by students and faculty (see #4 in Figure 3). Some classes were also held in it. Conditions this second year were even worse than the year before. The efforts put into the new building had shifted emphasis away from existing unfinished projects, and the lack of a maintenance man put the burden of day-to-day repairs on the faculty and students. While heroic

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid.

efforts were constantly made by some individuals, and on occasion by others, it looked as though the school would decay from within. However, the spring of 1966 was particularly beautiful and enrollment prospects seemed promising.¹⁹

As the Academy was unable to receive a mortgage for additional property, John and Joan Wolter purchased two acres and a house from Fred Balleck, located within the Academy property, in the hopes that faculty living conditions could be improved.²⁰ The property also contained an excellent well, source of a much needed water supply for the school. Mr. Wolter also employed a local heavy equipment company to construct a six-acre athletic field, improve existing roads, and install the new septic systems.²¹

In the fall of 1965, Mr. Wolter felt that without a real gymnasium it would be advisable to enclose the swimming pool for winter recreation. This project was finally completed in the spring of the second year.²²

In anticipation of increased enrollment, construction was started on the second floor of the dormitory during the winter of 1965-1966. The confusion incurred by at least five construction projects undertaken simultaneously was almost disastrous, but somehow, by the summer of 1966, the

¹⁹See Table 16, p. 118.

²⁰John and Joan Wolter and Fred Balleck, "Deed to Balleck Property," Essex, Connecticut, June 1, 1966.

²¹Flood & Smith, Inc., bills to Becket Academy, February-May, 1965.

²²Mr. Wolter felt that the boys needed recreation besides their work. Also the pool would help keep them clean.

projects were beginning to fall into a pattern. The addition of black tops on the major roads encompassing the campus, and the seeding of acres of grass and field, gave an impression of healthy, clean progress.²³

The toll on the faculty, however, was immense. Everyone, with the exception of Christopher Warren and his wife, left the school.²⁴ By fall, 1966, all the projects were generally completed. However, married teachers still had to live in cramped quarters and unmarried teachers resided in a single room without kitchen facilities, sharing bathrooms with the students, but a new faculty of nine instructors in addition to John Wolter and Christopher Warren brought a breath of fresh air to the school. The hardships of the first two years shifted from agony to story-telling by the two original pioneers and their wives.²⁵

Progress during third year, 1966-1967

At this time the school deeded a half acre of land to Mr. and Mrs. Warren so they could build their own home on the school grounds. This helped to alleviate some problems of faculty housing.²⁶ The year 1966-1967 also brought to Becket Academy a particularly valuable man, Jan Lorenc. Besides possessing many attributes as an artist and

²³Joan Wolter, "Pictorial History," p. 38..

²⁴See Table 7, p. 110.

²⁵Ibid.

Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut. Interviews with Mrs. Christopher Warren, Mrs. Sidney DuPont, Mr. Jan Lorenc, Mr. Neal Rist, June, August 1971.

²⁶"Quit Claim Deed," Norwich Savings Society to Becket Academy, East Haddam, Connecticut, September 22, 1966.

mathematics teacher, Mr. Lorenc was a graduate architect and he and Mr. Wolter spent long hours concocting various schemes for the school.

The visit of Dr. Wilson Parkhill, in the early fall of 1966, pointed out physical needs and provided stimulus to move ahead with construction. Again using the credit of workmen and suppliers, and staff and student labor whenever they could provide it, Mr. Wolter embarked upon several additional projects with the hopes of creating by one "great push" a school plant that was really acceptable.²⁷

That winter, the third story of Baruch Hall was added and a three story faculty apartment building was attached. Mr. Wolter also built a 1500 square foot extension onto his home so he could move the school canteen from his too-small living room to a space large enough to accomodate the student body of ninety-four students. The lower floor of St. Thomas More Hall (see #6 in Figure 3), which was dormitory space, was completely gutted and refinished in order to triple the size of the dining hall facilities. Lastly, the winter of 1966 culminated in the beginning of the gymnasium-classroom complex, a building of some 14,000 square feet (see #1 in Figure 3).²⁸

For the first time in the history of the school, a building had construction plans. In this regard, both the faculty apartments and the gymnasium-classroom complex were a milestone. John Wolter was still the General Contractor and Head Maintenance Man, and the faculty and students labored in their non-academic hours.

²⁷Letter from Wilson Parkhill, Belgrade, Maine, January 21, 1967.

²⁸Joan Wolter, "Pictorial History," pp. 38-56.

Expansion during fourth year, 1967-1968

Although the Academy was again immersed in mud, dust and confusion, most of the new faculty members remained for the following school year. Five new teachers were added to cover the increased enrollment (120 students) for the year 1967-1968.²⁹ This school year was marked by internal improvements. Another septic system was installed and the water lines connecting all the wells in the campus were inter-connected.³⁰ The entire student body was moved to the new "structurally complete" Baruch Hall. The rooms on the second floor of Thomas More Hall above the dining hall were converted to infirmary rooms, and an apartment was constructed for a resident school nurse. Separate plumbing and kitchens were gradually installed in the single teachers' apartments, and the barn-gymnasium was reverted back to a shed-storage area to accomodate maintenance vehicles. During this year, there was opportunity to put in outdoor recreational apparatus such as a swing, backstops, goal posts and, lately, dig a large shallow pond for a hockey team.³¹

In the late spring of 1968, a workshop-garage was started next to the Wolter's home (see #12 in Figure 3). This building was to be built from "left over" materials from all the construction projects. These materials were gathered and hand-carried to the site. By fall, the building was finished, using only Becket Academy faculty, staff and

²⁹See Table 7, p. 110.

³⁰Hood & Smith, Bills to Becket Academy, May-June 1967.

³¹Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut. Interviews with Christopher Warren, Sidney DuPont, Jan Lorenc, July-August 1971.

students. "Native" lumber, which blended well into the natural setting of the landscape, was purchased for siding on the barn. Since everyone liked the appearance of this rough-cut lumber, it was decided to use it as the eventual siding on all the buildings whenever possible.³²

The incorporation of Becket Academy as a non-profit corporation enabled Mr. Wolter to raise monies. He decided that the ideal project would be a much needed chapel which would serve not only as a place of worship but also as a "meeting house" to bring the school community together for discussion on common problems³³ (see #2 in Figure 3). Jan Lorenc, though he had left the school, designed the chapel which was started in the fall of 1968 before any money was raised for it. Finally, with the help of John Shea, Mr. Wolter raised \$26,827.00, an amount that was almost exactly the cost of the chapel. As the donations came in, more materials were bought and the chapel slowly took shape, using rough-cut, native lumber and wood-blend asphalt shingles.

Beautification of buildings and campus, 1969-1970

It was decided to carry this natural motif throughout the campus. Consequently, the school year 1969-1970 was spent attaching a veneer of rough-cut, native lumber to the cement block buildings. By spring, Founders Hall, St. Thomas More Hall, and the pool were all beautified in this manner. The project was done entirely by the students and staff. New roofs were installed on Founders Hall and the pool by

³²Ibid.

³³Letter to friends and parents from John Wolter, East Haddam, Connecticut, May 21, 1968.

Mr. Burg, the father of one of the students. All three stories of Baruch Hall were given the rough-cut lumber treatment and a Mansard roof. Much of this work was done by professional lumber framers because of the height. However, all staining and painting was finished by the students. During the summer, students were hired to paint the trim a barn red to further "tie-in" the buildings and give the campus a uniform appearance.³⁴

Additionally, in the spring of 1970, the students and faculty planted over thirty rose bushes, 75 shrubs, and a variety of bushes and flowers which were either purchased by the truckload from the farmers' market or transplanted from vegetation donated from a near-by estate. Suddenly, by summer 1970, Becket Academy looked like a real school, buildings were uniform, grass was green, roads were black-topped, and flowers and shrubs abounded. Large hilly and swampy areas were fenced in with board fence, and Hereford cattle were introduced to "maintain" these rugged areas. The cattle did an excellent job making previously unsightly areas peaceful and beautiful. By the fall of 1970, Becket Academy, with its blending of buildings into the natural landscape, looked as though it had been in existence for fifty years.³⁵

Throughout the entire seven years of the Academy's existence, interior renovation by the students and staff was a continual process. When it was too cold to work outside, they worked inside. Over the

³⁴John Wolter, "Pictorial History," Book 2, miscellaneous pictures of the Academy.

Personal interviews with Sidney DuPont, Christopher Warren, May 1970.

³⁵Ibid.

four years, from 1965 to 1969, all the interiors of Founders Hall, Thomas More Hall, Baruch Hall, the Brian House and Faculty House were wood-panelled when needed. In the spring and summer of 1970, three additional four room faculty apartments were put into Baruch Hall. The inside of the pool was bricked in the winter of 1970.³⁶

The sheer determination of the building of the Becket Academy plant had its effects. Unfortunately, it discouraged and broke the spirit of many people.³⁷ However, in content it gave an outlet to the creative and physical energy of many people and made them aware of what human beings can accomplish if the will is there to do it. Not to be forgotten, it also taught hundreds of students and staff about construction and maintenance and gave them skills which they would need later in life.

The financial statements for each year of Becket Academy's exteriors are printed in Appendix I. They are unusual in that there are no budget figures for the first four years of the Academy growth. There were none. The first four years were strictly "hand-to-mouth" with John Wolter juggling figures any way he saw fit. Budget figures appear only after 1968.³⁸

Finances

Banking

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷See Table 17, p. 121-22.

³⁸See Appendix I, p. 205.

To purchase the initial property for Becket Academy in East Had-dam a mortgage of \$85,000 was received from the Norwich Savings Society, Norwich, Connecticut.³⁹ This mortgage included the purchase price of \$65,000 and \$20,000 for the construction of Founders Hall, the classroom building in the school year, 1964-1965. To build the headmaster's home, a personal mortgage of \$22,000 was negotiated and received from the Dime Savings Bank in Norwich, Connecticut by John and Joan Wolter.⁴⁰

In the spring of 1965, Mr. Wolter and Mr. Hanrahan attempted to refinance the Becket Academy mortgage for \$150,000 to enable them to build the first floor of Baruch Hall. This mortgage was denied. Despite lack of financing, Mr. Wolter and Mr. Hanrahan went ahead on the construction of this part of the building with the belief that the Norwich Savings Society, after seeing the building, enrollment at capacity, and the school operating at a profit, would reconsider. The gamble paid off when, in October 1965, the Norwich Savings Society granted the mortgage of \$150,000.⁴¹

In the winter of 1966, Mr. Wolter opened negotiations for the purchase of a home located on the school grounds, owned by Mr. and Mrs. Fred T. Balleck, Jr. A mortgage of \$15,000 was obtained from the

³⁹Mortgage, Norwich Savings Society, Norwich, Connecticut, Becket Academy, Inc., June 1964.

⁴⁰Mortgage, Dime Savings Bank to Joan M. Wolter, Norwich, Connecticut, August 1964.

⁴¹Mortgage, Norwich Savings Society to Becket Academy, Inc., Norwich, Connecticut, October 1965.

Chester Savings Bank, Chester, Connecticut, and John and Joan Wolter took title to the Balleck property on June 1, 1966.⁴²

With the expanding need for education, recreation and residential facilities, Mr. Wolter felt compelled during the school year of 1966-1967 to construct additional buildings. Although his attempt to again refinance the mortgage with the Norwich Savings Society was rejected, the pressing need for these facilities decided him to go ahead and complete the construction of Baruch Hall and start building a gymnasium-classroom complex. At this time the Norwich Savings Society still declined to refinance the mortgage, but the Thames Branch of the Connecticut Bank and Trust Company in Norwich, Connecticut agreed to extend a line of credit of \$100,000 to Becket Academy, John Wolter and Joan Wolter to help defray the costs of the almost completed buildings.⁴³

The additional financing needed to realize this remarkable growth in appraised value can be attributed to the following facts:

1. John Wolter acted as general contractor in all construction.
2. John Wolter and Faculty designed and engineered all buildings and renovations.
3. Much of the actual work, construction and decoration was performed by the students, faculty and staff at Becket.
4. Almost all maintenance was performed by students, faculty

⁴²Mortgage, Chester Savings Bank to John and Joan Wolter, Chester, Connecticut, May 1966.

Deed to Balleck House, June 1, 1966.

⁴³Letter from John Fay, Assistant Vice President, Connecticut Bank and Trust Company, Norwich, Connecticut, November 7, 1968.

and staff. The saving from this "self maintenance policy" was put toward new construction.⁴⁴

5. Most of the staff was young or inexperienced; thus the savings on faculty salaries were put into capital construction.⁴⁵

6. Large portions of the headmaster's salary were put into capital construction.⁴⁶

7. During the periods 1964-1971, there was an inflationary factor of approximately seven percent.⁴⁷

There were also many donations of labor, material and money from various parents. The chapel and chaplain's quarters were donated.⁴⁸ Immunity from Federal Income Tax and the Connecticut Sales Tax of five percent was realized as a result of the status change from profit to non-profit in 1968. This saving could be channelled into major repairs and construction projects. In addition, credit for periods ranging from three to twelve months was extended to the Academy by various companies, allowing the school the use of approximately \$25,000 to \$75,000 in credit.⁴⁹

⁴⁴Personal interview with William McCarry, C.P.A., Becket Academy, East Haddam, Connecticut, August 2, 1971.

⁴⁵See Table 17, pp. 121-22.

⁴⁶See Appendix I, p. 202.

⁴⁷Conversation with Joseph Carney, Economist, Middletown Chamber of Commerce, Middletown, Connecticut, March 23, 1972.

⁴⁸See Appendix I, p. 205.

⁴⁹These companies include: Plasticrete Corporation, Hamden, Connecticut; Moodus Lumber Company, Moodus, Connecticut; J. Darren & Sons, Norwich, Connecticut; Hartford Provision Company, New Britain, Connecticut;

John Wolter was able to arrange for this credit initially through the help of James Hanrahan,⁵⁰ and also by his own powers of persuasion. But the most significant fact in the financial success of the school is indicated by an analysis of the financial statement of each school year as presented in Appendix I. Beginning in 1964, and subsequently for each year until the present, not only did Becket Academy meet its financial obligations, but it operated at a surplus. This surplus, and the apparent physical prosperity of the school has given the banking and business community increased confidence in the school and therefore encouraged their financial support by extending credit when needed.⁵¹

Additional financing

As noted on the Debt Schedule of Becket School, Inc. and John and Joan Wolter, the total bank financial obligations outstanding as of March 1971 were \$107,000 to the Norwich Savings Society, \$19,000 to the Dime Savings Bank on the Wolter house, and \$11,000 to the Chester Savings Bank on the Brian house.⁵² There are no monies outstanding to the Connecticut Bank and Trust Company. The only additional debt on the Becket School Debt Schedule was \$100,000 payable to James Hanrahan for his 51 shares in Becket Academy, Inc., and \$62,000 in debentures to the

Sunshine Dairy, Middletown, Connecticut; Redwing Oil Company, Portland, Connecticut.

⁵⁰Both James Hanrahan and John Wolter co-signed the mortgage note with Norwich Savings Society, Norwich, Connecticut.

⁵¹See Appendix I, p. 207.

⁵²Ibid.

Wolter children.⁵³ This debt of \$299,000 is in marked contrast to an appraised value of \$1,097,400 on the property, Becket School, Inc., and John and Joan Wolter.⁵⁴

Internal Organization of the School

To enable the tremendous growth in faculty, students, and physical and financial assets to develop in seven short years, the internal organization of Becket Academy was unique from its beginning. The focal point was the lack of apparent stability. While Mr. Wolter remained in full and definite control, he delegated authority and responsibility often and shifted personnel both vertically and laterally to gain the maximum advantage to the school.

The organizational structure, as diagramed in Table 1, placed John Wolter at the top of the pyramid generally, the more experienced faculty next, followed by new faculty and students. However, there was constant shifting and it was not uncommon for students to perform in the capacity usually considered adult areas, and it was not unusual for new faculty members to rise to positions of importance almost overnight. There were jobs to be done and if a person did a job, he kept it; conversely, if he failed to do the job, he lost it.

Christopher Warren and Sidney DuPont retained more responsibility than they lost and could, from 1967, be considered as "next in command." Circumstances would dictate who should take over. Generally if

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Edward Bogdan, "Appraisal," Becket Academy, Inc., Middletown, Connecticut, Tynam Bogdan Agency, April 16, 1971.

it were an academic or guidance matter, Mr. Warren directed it; in a situation involving the dining hall or maintenance, Mr. DuPont would emerge and assume supervision. In dormitory and athletic areas, various members of the faculty took charge in subsequent years, depending upon the seasons of the year, living quarters, and their own strengths and weaknesses.

The question of conferring job titles was settled by allowing each faculty member to designate his own title. Mr. Wolter felt that maximum flexibility was gained by not assigning specific titles, thereby allowing many people to wear many different hats and to play many roles without becoming "job bound" or stepping on another's toes. It was not until Mr. Wolter left for a Sabbatical in 1970 that he felt the need for delegating definite authority and responsibility.⁵⁵

Intimate student contact

Headmaster John Wolter maintained close contact with individual students from the beginning of the school in 1964 until he left for his Sabbatical in 1970 by what he called the "Canteen System." This system was simply that a student, in order to receive his nighttime snack, had to go to the Canteen in Mr. Wolter's home after study hall. In this way, Mr. Wolter, or his wife, was able daily to look almost every student full in the face and hear the events of the day. The information gathered from Canteen was usually then reflected in Mr. Wolter's talk at assembly the next morning which he also controlled closely. Additionally,

⁵⁵Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut. Interviews with Marge Lindner, Patrick Scully, Bob Morahan, Peter Kenney, May-July 1971.

all students, knowing that Mr. Wolter's home and office were always open, developed the habit of frequently stopping by.

While not directing the Student Council personally, from 1964 until 1970 Mr. Wolter made certain that student opinion was well represented about the school and that their needs were met. Since the students contributed so much to the school, he regarded it as particularly important that he maintained a keen awareness of their needs.⁵⁶

To aid him in his role as headmaster, Mr. Wolter has relied heavily on the advice of the school's accountant, lawyer and various friends and Trustees whom he considers knowledgeable in certain areas. He often uses the telephone to gain quick opinions on almost any matter and make a quick decision. The major criticism thrown at Mr. Wolter is that he is a manipulator, and a "bricks and mortar" man. Although he possesses a broad amount of general knowledge, he is weakest in program and, knowing this, has delegated academic responsibility in the main to Christopher Warren, and in areas of Science and Social Studies to Sidney DuPont.

Effects of Growth in Students and Faculty

The growth of the numbers of students, faculty and their immediate family had tremendous effects upon the school. The "jump" in enrollment each year for the first four years presented challenges, not only to the physical plant and equipment, but also to the energies of the staff. Naturally, it had both positive and negative effects upon

⁵⁶Ibid.

the faculty morale which, in turn, had a major effect on the well-being of the students.⁵⁷ From 1964 through 1966, the school suffered serious losses in staff and, beginning in 1966, the Academy began to lose students during the school year as well as those students who did not return for the successive year. While the lack of physical facilities played a part, it was certainly not a major consideration as only two students were lost during the second year of the school and only seven students failed to return,⁵⁸ despite the fact that the entire staff, with the exception of Mr. Warren, resigned from the Academy. One factor contributing to the high rate of student drop-outs was the Academy's policy of not retaining a boy against his will.⁵⁹

The saving grace for this 1965-1966 school year was that Mr. Warren and Mr. Wolter, through personal dynamism and sheer hard work, were able to exert a positive effect on the student body of 78.⁶⁰ But as student numbers increased above 100, it was impossible for Mr. Wolter and Mr. Warren to "effect the entire student body positively" as well as undertake the duties of training new teachers and developing curriculum. Therefore, the academy sustained three really difficult school years from 1966 to 1968.⁶¹ However, by the fall of 1969, with construction

⁵⁷Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut. Interviews with Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Warren, Mr. Sidney DuPont, Mrs. Wolter.

⁵⁸See Table 7, p. 110.

⁵⁹Unwritten school policy in effect since 1964.

⁶⁰Table 7, p. 110. Despite a tremendous faculty turnover, the overwhelming majority of students remained at the school.

⁶¹Ibid. (Note increase in students not returning.)

completed and programs developed, mostly by trial and error, a general calm and status quo began to prevail over the school.

During the first seven years of its existence, the school was aided by the fact that, for the most part, both students and staff were homogenous in regard to race, religion, and general background.⁶² However, special guidance problems were created by the growing number of students from divorced, adoptive, or deceased-parent families. To solve these problems, it became necessary to hire John Jay Ashe, a trained psychiatric-social worker, to consult with the headmaster and staff and work individually with certain students.⁶³ Since most parents were undecided concerning the educational future of their children, this too affected the guidance and placement program, causing a great deal more work than anticipated by Mr. Wolter and Mr. Warren. It eventually led to the development of an extensive library section on Secondary Education and Schools.⁶⁴

In 1966-1967, the school adopted a schedule which required every student to return home to family, friend, or relative during the school vacations which occurred monthly for at least four days and up to two weeks on the Christmas and Easter holidays and breaks. The geographic distribution of the school's enrollment was therefore limited; most

⁶²See Table 21 and Table 8, p. 124 and p. 112.

⁶³Employment Records, 1969, 1970.

⁶⁴Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut. Interview with Mr. Gilbert Morneault, August, 1971.

students came from Connecticut and surrounding States.⁶⁵ This practice of frequently returning the students to their homes provided contact with the parents and helped to achieve a better understanding of the school's policies. Parents who were simply looking for a place to put their sons were quickly singled out and subtle "school-parent" counseling ensued.

By offering school scholarships, accepting children from the Department of Welfare and children sponsored by foundations, the school by 1969 was able to realize a diversity in the racial and economic backgrounds of its student body.⁶⁶ The presence of these children created a healthy atmosphere which enabled the school to resist classification as a "haven for rich boys" or an institution for state wards.

The enrollment of boys during the summer months and September, traditionally heavy enrollment months,⁶⁷ also affected the program by making individual and group planning almost impossible. Still, students, in many cases, performed outstandingly, principally because most of the teachers came to the Academy out of sincere interest⁶⁸ and did their best under trying circumstances.

Salaries have had considerable effect on the members of the Becket Academy community. Because they were modest, the needs of the youthful teachers have engendered a real sharing of resources from each

⁶⁵See Table 11, p. 114. See School Calendar, p. 145.

⁶⁶See Student Support Table 14, p. 116.

⁶⁷See Applications Received Table 16, p. 118.

⁶⁸See Table 18, p. 123.

other and from the school. No one needed a second car; he borrowed one. No one needed a canoe; the school had ten canoes. In addition, this modesty in the teachers' salaries necessitated a simplicity of wants and fostered a "back to basics" attitude which was in keeping with the living and working conditions during the early years at the Academy. It was this precise "self-sacrificing" attitude that enabled everyone to "laugh off" many situations that were not really funny.⁶⁹ It also brought out the best in people as well as the worst. The effect on the students and staff having to work on construction was, at best, a feeling that the school belonged to them. At worst, it produced a feeling of resentment, of being persuaded or intimidated into doing work for a purpose other than "self."⁷⁰

Aside from these individual responses to the hardships and deprivations, the overall effect was one of tremendous school spirit. Young boys and teachers alike saw that the educational process need not be confined to a classroom, or, when confined to a classroom, it was not necessary to have every piece of educational apparatus at one's fingertips. Faculty members and students were realizing the reality of the adage, "Necessity is the mother of invention," and perhaps more can be learned by improvising.

⁶⁹There were times when sewage would back up because of inadequate septic systems, and days went by without water because of frozen pipes. Living areas were without heat sometimes for a month and a half.

⁷⁰Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut. Interviews with a select group of Becket Academy students, May, 1971.

As construction projects took place, the interest of parents and friends in the school increased. When it appeared that Becket Academy "would not sink," advice and donations of materials and money started to pour in. Overnight, the library took shape, and of the 700 people contacted for chapel donations, over 430 contributed.⁷¹ Printing presses and photography equipment appeared out of the blue; as did a milkshake machine, typewriters and furniture. As the interiors of the buildings were finished, pictures and decorations materialized; and as the exteriors were completed, flowers, shrubs and small trees arrived by truck and were planted by the students, parents, friends and staff. None of this could have happened without the faith of many, many people.

The financing, always inadequate, caused a "toughening up" from the headmaster down to the ranks. There simply was no other way. But the effect of poor bank financing brought the faculty and students closer together and it also incurred the sympathy of construction men and suppliers,⁷² with the result that whenever the school needed something, someone always came forward and supplied it, or someone was always willing to extend credit.

Since the Academy did not build up high banking debts, it has been able to weather a period of economic uncertainty much easier than could schools with large physical plants and high overhead and financing

⁷¹Letter from John J. Wolter to Parents and Friends (Chapel Fund), December 6, 1969.

⁷²Plasticrete Corporation, knowing the school's situation, gave Becket Academy a two-year loan on construction materials. Red Wing Oil gave six-month to one-year credit on oil. New England Ironworks constructed the pool roof below cost.

charges.⁷³ From a time when Mr. Wolter had to talk the banks into extending financial assistance, the situation has been reversed. Commercial banks now want the school's business, and the cost of short term borrowing has been reduced by selecting the bank which offers the best interest rate.⁷⁴

The effect of a "loose internal organization" on the faculty and staff has had merits. First year teachers were able to undertake projects which they would not be allowed to attempt in the public school system unless they were department heads. On their part, senior teachers have the confidence that when a job becomes tough or boring, someone else is willing to step in and take over. Since the students are treated as adults, they feel like adults. When they perform work normally done by a licensed teacher or mature supervisor, they can have the satisfying knowledge that they are approaching maturity.

Summary

In the analysis of the development and growth of Becket Academy, it can be seen that the history of the early years of the school, with its loosely structured organization and inadequate financing, was a

⁷³These schools with elaborate buildings, by necessity, have a high maintenance factor. Because of this, these schools frequently rely on donations and borrowing. During an economic pinch, donations drop off and borrowing becomes more costly, therefore decreasing revenue and increasing costs. In addition, schools accustomed to solving problems by "begging and borrowing" lose their ability to solve problems internally.

⁷⁴Visits from Connecticut Bank & Trust by John Fay, Spring 1971, and Home National Bank by Sal Stagliano, April and May 1971. Interview with Frank Davis, National Bank of New England, May 1971.

series of frustrations culminating in the large turnover and loss of students at the end of the fifth year, as shown in Table 7. This chapter also shows, however, that dedicated people who are willing to work together long and hard can establish a measure of stability, as exemplified by the successful 1970-1971 school year. It points up the fact that different people respond differently to a situation; what inspires one individual is sometimes discouraging to another.

C H A P T E R V I

PROGRAM

Chapter V dealt with the growth and development of Becket Academy in its early years by focusing on the faculty, their families, the students, the construction and improvement of buildings and grounds, the financing and internal organization of the school, and the major actors who contributed to the accomplishments, and the frustrations, of those early years. In this chapter, the program at Becket Academy will be described and evaluated. Since all aspects of the school life--classroom, gymnasium, dormitory, dining hall, parents, students, teachers, and friends are interrelated and interdependent, focusing a spotlight on any one facet of school life cannot give a complete or even adequate representation of what Becket Academy attempts to accomplish. However, for the purpose of this study, a breakdown of the program into individual parts follows, with the division being academic considerations and extra-curricular activities.

Academic

To understand the development of the Academy's curriculum over the seven years of its existence is also to have knowledge of the type of student and the kind of instructor that the school appeals to and/or seeks out. The driving educational goal that led to the founding of Becket Academy was to find a need and fill it.¹ That need was for an

¹John Wolter had a contempt for independent schools which screened students on the basis of religion, intelligence, race, economic status,

elementary boarding school that would cater to the average, below average, or apathetic student; to make the school interesting, exciting, challenging, and above all, successful for him. The type of teacher best suited to dealing with and helping this kind of boy would be a person with human qualities especially--not only academically sound, but also young at heart and having interests similar to the boys. Most important, a teacher would have to be warm, firm, understanding, compassionate, and an ethical model to the students.²

The faculty members brought together during the first school year had similar backgrounds and they represented a close proximity to the ideal teacher at that time. Of the three faculty members, one had boarding school experience, and the other two had been public school teachers. Among them were eleven years of teaching experience and an average age of twenty-six. Two were married with families, and all of them lived on campus and shared the teaching and duty load.³

The student body, numbering thirty-five boys in grades six to eight, had equally similar backgrounds. For some among the eighth graders, this was their last chance to develop study skills and obtain basic elementary school material before attending high school. For

in short, that provided a service only to people who perhaps needed it the least.

²Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut. Interviews with Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Warren, Mr. and Mrs. Sidney DuPont, Mrs. Joan Wolter, Summer 1961.

³See Table 17, p. 121.

others, poor performance in the lower grades was the reason for enrolling at Becket Academy.⁴

During the first three school days, the new students were given the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills to determine ability, grouping, and specific areas of academic weakness (for results on standardized tests, see Appendix II). Four groups were formed (one sixth grade, one seventh, two eighth), and five basic elementary school subjects were selected (English, incorporating all language arts skills, mathematics, social studies, science and French).

Textbooks were purchased, and some basic paperback classics were obtained, forming the nucleus of the library. Five classes were held daily, Monday through Saturday, with English and Math, the "major" subjects, meeting every day, and the other subjects scheduled for four sessions each week. The excess classes were given over to "reading" which was merely composed of drill exercises in SRA laboratory kits.⁵

The students met each late afternoon and early evening for supervised study halls, where homework assignments were completed. The students were expected to complete their assignments during the prescribed study times. The general division and explanation of the curriculum was two-fold: lower groups and upper groups.⁶ The work to be covered in sequence:

⁴See Table 7, p. 110 and interview with Mr. Christopher Warren, August 1971.

⁵Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut. Interview with Mr. Christopher Warren, August 1971.

⁶Ibid. The decision as to grouping took into account age, grade, social and emotional maturity as well as achievement and ability.

English.--lower groups: penmanship, spelling, vocabulary, dictionary skills, simple sentence structure, paragraph composition construction, letter writing, basic grammar skills (parts of speech), capitalization and punctuation.

English.--upper groups: encyclopedia skills, compound and complex sentence structure, research projects, lengthy compositions, literature, advanced grammar skills (gerunds, participles, infinitives, adjective clauses, etc.).

Mathematics.--lower groups: basic number concepts, addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions, decimals, percents, problem solving.

Mathematics.--upper groups: introduction to modern math, algebra.

Social Studies.--lower groups: map and global skills, world geography, with emphasis on the United States.

Social Studies.--upper groups: American history, current events, government, research projects.

Science.--lower groups: general science, weather, insect, animal and plant life (life science), astronomy.

Science.--upper groups: environmental studies, earth science, the human body, biology, chemistry, physics.

French.--upper group: an introductory course.

(Reading will be dealt with separately as its place in the development of the curriculum comes about.)⁷

⁷Ibid.

Essentially, a student is considered as being in the lower group until completion of the sixth grade. Upper groups are junior high school level (grades seven and eight) unless their test scores and general study habits indicate that they need further work at the lower level. But even in this case (which occurs often), a group of such students is selected to form a special class, composed of boys of the approximate age group in order that an unbalanced social situation does not arise.⁸

A new school is in no position to turn away students, so when parents of boys in grade levels below the starting sixth grade year made application, it was decided to accept fourth and fifth grade students.⁹ If a boy comes to Becket early enough, especially during the middle elementary grade years of fourth, fifth or sixth, an opportunity for all-around growth is presented. These younger boys are more pliable, respond better and generally are more enthusiastic and ready to take on something new. But a boy coming new to the school for only one year in the eighth grade is at an advanced age (thirteen-fifteen), has had time to build up defenses and negative attitudes toward authority, and realistically cannot develop a spirit of loyalty to the school. Enough examinations of the various boys that have attended the Academy has shown that it takes about one-and-a-half years for the completed

⁸Ibid. The present sense has been used purposely because the basic academic philosophy has remained constant for the past seven years, though individual parts of the curriculum have developed and improved as new staff members were added and the administration learned more about curriculum development.

⁹This proved a wise decision as younger students not only had a longer time to benefit from the school's program and see the school develop, but they were also "repeat business."

attitudinal cycle to take place. It just cannot be fully accomplished in one year.¹⁰

Another basic decision made in that first year did not prove to be as wise as that of accepting younger boys. The first "day student" was accepted, and it was not long before it was decided that the school's best work could be accomplished only with full boarding students, where many of the school's environmental factors could be controlled. The day student who is unable to participate in all the events and activities that collectively form the spirit of the school does not really become a member of the "community" in the fullest sense of the word. In addition, not being able to control and develop the study habits of the day student led to "problems." Under the study hall system at the school, a teacher could feel reasonably confident that an assignment given would be completed the following day. The day student too often would be "the one that got away." Since the first year, therefore, the school has dealt exclusively with boarding students.¹¹

Despite an admirable start, two of the three faculty members left after the first year, but an exciting second year seemed in the making. Enrollment had risen to forty-five students by June 1965, an increase of eleven new boys. Only eighteen had graduated and one underclassman would not be returning, so a nucleus of twenty-six

¹⁰Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut. Interviews with Mr. Neal Rist, Mr. John Kennedy, Mr. Sidney DuPont, July 1971.

¹¹Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut. Interview with Mr. Christopher Warren, July 1971.

students from the first year remained. In addition, the first summer session attracted twenty-seven students, of which three elected to return for the fall semester.¹²

The second year of the school began in September 1965 with sixty-one students and a staff of six. Three of the six faculty members were new to teaching, with the final new member having six years of teaching experience. Later that year, the first female member of the faculty was added.¹³

The two most important innovations to the curriculum were the separating of reading as a definite major subject, and the relaxing of the foreign language requirement to only those students in the top upper groups. Over the summer, a larger study hall was constructed concurrent with more dormitory facilities, and new classrooms were added. Since a major phase of construction had passed, there was more time (and less interruption) to devote to studies. New purchases for the library were made, mostly in the area of reading books for boys, but several reference materials were bought. Though library facilities were far from complete, the library was becoming more of a center and academic gathering place.¹⁴

¹²See Table 7, p. 110. John Wolter and Christopher Warren realized that Summer School not only helped deray costs for students and faculty during the summer, but was a potential source of students.

¹³See Table 17, p. 121.

¹⁴Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut. Interview with Mr. Christopher Warren, July 1971.

Once again, however, there was a depletion in the faculty ranks at the end of the year, with four teachers leaving for other positions.¹⁵ But student enrollment had increased during the year, so that there were seventy-eight students by June 1966, and there was another successful summer school, with thirty-five students enrolled, of which twelve remained for the coming school year.¹⁶

Several important developments were in evidence when Becket Academy began its third year in September, 1966. The student enrollment of ninety-seven was large enough to insure financial solvency, and the school's name was becoming well known. The states of Rhode Island and Connecticut tentatively approved the educational complex, and the first state students were enrolled. A new language laboratory had been added, with an emphasis on reading, and the school hired its second female staff member, a reading specialist and consultant.¹⁷

The greatest long-range development, though not fully realized at the time, was the beginning of a permanent and professional teaching staff.¹⁸ Because of the increased staff, duty responsibilities were lightened, instruction was improved, and major purchases of new textbooks, study kits, and other academic materials were made. More staff

¹⁵See Table 17, p. 121.

¹⁶Summer School Analysis Sheets, Becket Academy Office, East Haddam, Connecticut, 1965-1970.

¹⁷Table 17, p. 121, Table 7, p. 110.

¹⁸Ibid.

members were taking courses, and more staff and curriculum meetings were held, subject to improving the overall program.¹⁹

Student enrollment again increased during the year, passing the 100 mark and climbing to 112 by June of 1967, necessitating the decision to begin construction of a new classroom building.²⁰ A retired master teacher, with twenty years experience in private elementary boarding schools, came to the school in the capacity of Advisor, and added Latin to the curriculum.²¹

Reading Program

At this point in the study it would be well to pause and focus on the final academic area added to the curriculum--added in that it was not developed nor well thought out prior to 1966. But by the end of the second school year it was decided by internal study that a stronger emphasis in reading was necessary. The program would have to be centered around the skills not obtained by students entering the lower grades (fourth, fifth and sixth) that should have been traditionally mastered by those grade levels. Students entering in September, 1965 were tested on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills and had composite scores at below grade level in every grade:

Fourth grade - nine months behind

Fifth grade - seven months behind

¹⁹Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut. Interviews with Mr. Sidney DuPont, Mr. Neal Rist, Mr. Christopher Warren, July 1971.

²⁰Table 7, p. 110.

²¹Table 17, p. 121.

Sixth grade - one year, one month behind

Seventh grade - five months behind

Eighth grade - one year behind²²

Clearly, this was the academic area that needed immediate attention. By September, 1966, a reading specialist was hired and a new language laboratory was installed that concentrated on developing listening skills and perceptive abilities. Materials in the form of records, tapes, basal readers, and comprehension skill spint masters were also added to the growing number of academic tools the school was rapidly acquiring. Upon the insistence of the reading teacher, more reading books, among them award-winning children's stories, were added to the library. This was a very important development. Prior to these library book purchases, the students' reading selections were limited to difficult classics "that the boys should read," or the non-challenging series books of the Hardy Boys variety.²³

To complete and summarize the reading program in the same fashion as the other academic subjects, the grade breakdown is as follows:

Reading.--lower groups: a complete summary of word attack skills--phonetic analysis (vowels, consonants, blends, digraphs, diphthongs); structural analysis (prefixes and suffixes, syllabication, spelling). The program also included a proper use of the SRA reading

²²Appendix II, p. 208.

²³Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut. Interviews with Mr. Sidney DuPont, Mr. Christopher Warren, Mr. Neal Rist, July 1971.

laboratory kits, and the inclusion of the corresponding SRA Pilot Library reading booklets, which stimulated the students to further library book selections.

Reading--upper groups: comprehension skills, which included reading for details and for inference; higher level basal readers; and reading within the subject context--in short, how to develop study skills in all subjects by using reading-taught abilities. The students were shown, by means of records, filmstrips and lectures, how to gain the greatest amount of information out of their social studies textbooks, how to study a foreign language, how to take notes, to outline, etc.²⁴

Increase of learning materials

The year 1966-1967 was a most developmental year academically. New sets of textbooks were purchased in every subject area. In English, mathematics and social studies, workbooks and keyed supplementary tests were bought, and SRA study kits in major and global skills and outlining and reporting skills were added. A new spelling book, containing 4,700 of the most commonly used words in a student's academic vocabulary was given to each student, and all were instructed in the six-step method for learning to spell a new word, a practice that is still in use today.²⁵

New classroom building

By this time, with the enrollment up to over 100 students and the classrooms intermingling with the dormitory residences, it was

²⁴Ibid. ²⁵Ibid.

decided to create an entirely new academic complex, one that could be kept separate from the dormitory, and that could free the original classroom building to be properly used as an administrative office. This new learning complex would boast twelve classrooms, including a science laboratory, an arts and crafts room, a stage, and could be converted into a learning center, and a large study hall that could easily accomodate the largest possible number of students.²⁶

Accreditation

The construction of the new classroom building, and the academic development it made possible, came none too soon, for the 1967-1968 school year opened to 121 students.²⁷ Nineteen of them came from the previous summer school, the largest number of carry-overs. With fifty-six students, it was the biggest and most successful summer session yet.²⁸ But the academic development of the previous year was a contributing factor in bringing about the most important growth in the school's history--the decision to seek approval and accreditation.

The evaluators visited every classroom, spoke at length with every teacher and many students, and generally looked everywhere. But the biggest and longest look was at the academic curriculum. The school did not emerge unscathed. The Connecticut Association of Independent Schools Committee recommended a series of immediate as well as long range additions, modifications and improvements. Among these

²⁶Ibid. ²⁷Table 7, p. 110.

²⁸Summer School Analysis Sheets. Note increasing numbers of students from Summer School.

recommendations were a definite library system and more effective use of the materials at hand. The committee concluded, however, that the school was definitely heading in the right direction and what the staff lacked in smoothness and perfection, they more than made up for in spirit and human insight.²⁹

Women teachers and elementary format

There were two other important happenings during the 1967-1968 school year. The staff included two women teachers, and they were both assigned to the lower group of students, one teaching English and reading, the other instructing in Science, mathematics and social studies. Though this arrangement lasted for only the one school year of 1967-68, it gave to the lower forms (grades four, five and six) a greater elementary school identity, and that treatment has continued through the years. A greater departmentalization takes place once the student reaches the seventh grade.³⁰

Progress reports

The other happening concerned the reporting of progress to the parents. Until January of 1968, only four report cards per year were submitted to the parents: at Thanksgiving, in January at the end of the first semester, at Eastertime, and at the end of the school year.

²⁹"Report of Evaluation Committee on Becket Academy," William Breene, chairman, New Milford, Connecticut, November 15, 1967, p. 17.

³⁰Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut. Interviews with Mr. Christopher Warren, Mr. Neal Rist, Mr. Sidney DuPont, Mr. Vincent Hunter, August 1971.

But to boys at the ages of nine to fourteen, waiting eight weeks between grades is like waiting for two years. Test preparations, forewarned and threatened with low grades, were to no avail as long as the calendar stretched so long between reports. Therefore, it was decided to reduce the waiting period from eight weeks to twelve days. Consequently, every two weeks a new progress report was mailed to the parent, with two copies prepared: one for the school office, the other for the student.

The new method of reporting retained the number system of 0-100, with 60 as passing grade, 70 as certifying grade, and 80 as honors grade. Each report card also listed an effort grade and conduct grade (E-Excellent, G-Good, F-Fair, P-Poor). Finally, the new progress report listed the student's average, his rank in class, and a "comparison" grade of gain or loss since the previous report.³¹

Parent conferences

The progress report was not the only method of reporting to parents. Again, a pattern of growth is in evidence here. For the first two years, the public school method of inviting all the parents on the same day for what was in reality nothing more than a two-minute chat with the subject teacher was the method of parental conferences. By the third year, however, it was decided that this folly could not continue.³²

To pacify the sociable nature of the teachers and parents involved, two "Parents Days" were scheduled each year, one in the fall,

³¹Ibid. ³²Ibid.

one in the spring. These get-togethers consisted only of picnics, outings, father-son athletic events, but had little to do with actual exchange of information. Instead, it merely set the stage for the real work to be done. Parents and teachers had met each other as mature adults; now, a businesslike air and manner could be easily obtained with better results. Parents were asked and often requested to make appointments to visit the school and engage in meaningful dialogue with the teachers. One to two hours were given for these conferences, and when completed, both teachers and parents would feel more secure and on firmer ground.³³

Enrollment stabilization

It was decided before the opening of school for the fifth year (1968-1969) to give over more dormitory space for living quarters for the staff members. While initially it meant less students and less revenue, this decision also proved to be a wise one. The previous high enrollment of 136 students in 1967-1968, while gratifying financially, led the staff and administrators to the conclusion that Becket Academy was coming close to leaving the enrollment range and status of a small school. But services, duty time, scheduling, class sizes, and other considerations, some of them intangible, sounded a warning device not to proceed further.³⁴

Perhaps the strongest argument was that of the realization of geometric progression, not arithmetic progression. A teacher cannot

³³Ibid. ³⁴Ibid.

really deal effectively on an individual basis on the many levels the school demanded if the student enrollment was too great. Unfamiliar names and faces, no time to deal with the troubled boy who needs help--these considerations led to the decision to stabilize enrollment at around 110-112 boys in order to maintain a low student-faculty ratio.³⁵

That fifth year saw an opening enrollment of 105 students (ten coming from the 1968 summer school) which increased to 114 by the end of the school year. The three basic subjects, English, reading and math, continued to perform their assigned tasks, but mostly through the drill, rote process. But for the first time, with the improvement of the library facilities at the behest of the Connecticut Association of Independent Schools Accrediting Committee, the subject areas of science and social studies came into their own, becoming project and research oriented, with films, filmstrips, records and tapes being used extensively. The most exciting and interesting work was done in these two areas during the year.³⁶

While social studies and science were, by their own merit, being elevated to "major subject" status (meeting every day during the week), the "minor subjects" were coming into their own. Music and art classes were conducted weekly, and French and Latin were offered. Also during the school's fifth year, two new innovations were added--one from within, and one from outside the school. A new method of grade gathering and class organization was discussed and passed by the faculty. Hard-cover notebooks, one for each academic subject and one more for assignments,

³⁵Ibid. ³⁶Ibid.

were given to each student, who would be responsible for all notes given in class, which would be written on the board by the teacher, so that copying and handwriting skills could be worked on. These notebooks would be worth twenty-five points toward each report card. Constant referrals back to these notebooks would be made in class, on homework and on tests. Students who were absent from class were still responsible for obtaining the notes, and in doing so could not fall behind in their work.³⁷

The other new development was Becket Academy's entrance into and acceptance of the services of "Project Learn."³⁸ This educational organization, funded by the Federal Government at its regional offices in Old Saybrook, Connecticut, under Title III, makes available to its member schools multi-media equipment and materials. Available upon request, at a fee of \$4.00 per student, are filmstrips, film loops, records, art prints, sculpture pieces, film machines, and 16mm movies which are especially useful and available in large numbers in the reading, social studies and science areas. By the correct use of this material and this organization, supplementary work can be given for visual and audial development and for meaningful deviation from the drill work of the classroom.³⁹

During the 1969 school year, Mr. Wolter and Mr. DuPont attended a one-week seminar in Avon, Connecticut. The purpose of the seminar

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Becket Academy became a regular member of "Project Learn" in October, 1968.

³⁹Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut. Interview with Mr. Christopher Warren, July 1971.

was to share with school personnel the new ungraded system of learning. Since the non-graded approach is individualized in nature, to inaugurate such a program at Becket Academy would be to negate the concept of small group learning instruction that has been the school's academic focal point since its beginning. A modified form of the program was therefore attempted in 1970 and some exciting results were obtained from the experiment. No formal science classes were offered. Instead, all students met each week to work on projects on science day. The program began with a main speaker, occasionally a guest, setting the tone and the topic. The students were then divided into small study groups emerging later with an in-depth report to be shared with the school. The afternoon was spent on a field trip, on campus or off. In the classroom on regular school days, the students were truly grouped according to individual subject strengths and weaknesses, not only by reading deficiencies. Attempts at modular time scheduling were included, giving different emphasis on a weekly basis to different subjects. The program was successful in its project-oriented activities, but less so in class structured learning.⁴⁰

During the school year of 1970-1971, when this experiment was attempted, the lowest rate of growth was recorded on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills.⁴¹ Yet, for many students, the experiment proved to them that learning can be a fun experience. They read widely and well,

⁴⁰Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut. Interview with Mr. Christopher Warren and Mr. Sidney DuPont, August 1971.

⁴¹See Appendix II, p. 220.

choosing topics of their individual interests, expanding, deepening and strengthening their knowledge. For future needs, the best of what has been learned during the Academy's past seven years should be put into effect. What follows may be a way of evaluating those needs:

Testing.--A student's test scores are only an indication of what he can accomplish on that particular day. But when 500 test results are available for study, some meaningful picture does materialize. Except for a two-year experimental period, Becket Academy has used the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills as its primary standardized testing tool. Given during the first week of the school year, its results are used specifically to measure initial ability. Students are assigned to groups according to the scores, along with the previous year's transcripts and common sense. During the first week in May, the alternate form of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills is given. The comparison of the two (September, May) results gives a picture of accomplishment on the items tested. A growth of one full academic year is the theoretical goal; apparently eight months is the realistic goal. In addition, the Otis I.Q. test is given in February. Both the Iowa and Otis I.Q. tests were chosen by Mr. Wolter, Mr. Warren and the staff because of the reliability and mobility of these tests and the ease and rapidity in which they can be corrected and scored.⁴²

All test results appear in Appendix II, but a brief review of some specific highlights in the academic history of the school may be in order. In the areas of comparison and rate of growth, only those

⁴²See Appendix II.

students tested at the beginning and end of the school year were employed.

During the first year, 1964-1965, the average I.Q. of the entire study body was 101 and their overall performance on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills was below average. With curriculum just developing, however, these students performed and developed well. The eighth graders, especially, improved their Iowa scores as a class, one year and two months. Lack of a structured reading program hampered only the seventh grade where there was little rate of growth in vocabulary and reading.⁴³

During the second year a moratorium was put on the spring tests by Mr. Wolter because of the particular faculty situation. This created a slight problem for comparison for the 1966-1967 school year because only the new students were tested on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills in September. Therefore, a separate listing and comparing of results had to be made, one over a two-year period⁴⁴ and one for the regular one-year.⁴⁵ The results showed that the thirty students tested and compared between September 1965 and May 1967 increased a total of 2.4 years, and that the forty-four new students tested just the previous September increased their test scores 0.9 years. This fine rate of growth came during the academically important third year. Becket Academy had purchased a new language laboratory, new textbooks and curricular materials, and a new staff was employed, all of which gave the faculty a feeling of accomplishment.

⁴³See Appendix II, p. 208. ⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Ibid.

A regular comparison of the Iowa tests for the school year 1967-1968 showed a rate of growth of the students tested at both ends of the school year of 1.0 increase⁴⁶. The greatest subject, or sub-section increase was in the area of reading, which improved 1.02 years. The lowest rate among the full year students was vocabulary (0.4), an area touched in all subjects but not really attacked in any. Median scores⁴⁷ showed that all grade levels except 5th (only 5.3) were ready to take on the work of the next grade level.

In 1966, Becket Academy joined the ranks of the Education Records Bureau (ERB). In the fall of 1968, and again in 1969, Mr. Wolter, in consultation with the faculty, decided to employ the ERB testing service. This meant using the Stanford Achievement Test instead of the traditional Iowa Test of Basic Skills. Advantages noted by the staff at the time included: a more diagnostic testing program, in science and social studies, in addition to the language arts, reading and math which the Iowa offered; more information available, and corrections made by professional staff at the ERB headquarters in New York. Mr. Wolter and Mr. Warren decided to eliminate the spring testing in 1969 and 1970 and use the two previous fall results for comparisons. Thus the only information available for the study was a comparison of students from sixth to seventh grade⁴⁸, and from seventh to eighth grade.⁴⁹ Rate of growth should have theoretically increased close to one year. Sixth to seventh grade comparisons were only 0.8, with a high individual improvement in science (1.8), and a low of

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹Ibid.

arithmetic computation (0.3). The seventh to eighth grade comparisons were worse: only 0.4 battery median improvement⁵⁰ with a high individual improvement shared by spelling and social studies (0.8), and a low of 0.2 in arithmetic application. In addition to these discouraging results, the amount of information returned was confusing to the staff. There was a lot to look at and study, but so many results were available that it became confusing. Also, the lapse of time between administering the tests and learning the results, though certainly short and efficient by the company's standards, were too lengthy for the concern of a school that had the students' interest to consider. Perhaps the tests were not administered properly, and continued use would have resulted in more meaningful data. However, Mr. Warren and Mr. Wolter decided to return to the more familiar Iowa Test of Basic Skills whose results (self-correcting) were available immediately.

The return to the Iowas in 1970-71 came at the same time as the non-graded experiment, summarized earlier as culturally successful, but academically neutral. The Iowas seemed to support this. The rate of growth⁵¹ for all students tested in October of 1970 and May 1971 was 0.7. The new ninth grade group fared worst, with an increase of 0.2. The younger students, given less of this freedom and more of the traditional skills, scored best with growths of 1.2 (fourth grade) and 1.0 (fifth grade).

The Otis Quick Scoring Mental Ability Tests, administered and corrected every school year in February, may point to even more

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Ibid.

meaningful data, at least in the realization of the type of student dealt with at Becket Academy. Each year the I.Q. average has clustered near the 100, or dead average level. Considering that over 400 students have been tested, and the average for six years is 101, it tends to indicate that not many of the above average students find their way to Becket Academy.

If these seven years of testing results have accomplished nothing else in their compilation, they have at least established school norms to compare in the future. But they have done more than that. Each year, Mr. Wolter and the staff evaluate the academic program, particularly on these basic results. Thus teachers, class procedure, attitudes, and school philosophy have all been affected by these results. So many tabulations eliminate the question of improper testing. When similar results occur from year to year, and compare over five or six years, then there is evidence of similarity and opportunity for evaluation. What the faculty does with these results will affect the future of academics at Becket Academy. It is already known that: students improved when reading programs were put into effect; students improved when their work was checked every day; I.Q. and Iowas compared to give a picture of a typical Becket student.

School schedule and calendar

Academics and testing have taken up the larger part of this chapter and rightfully so, keeping in mind that Becket is foremost a school, and in the business of educating young boys. But Becket Academy, being a boarding school, is also a life style, a living situation. Mr.

Wolter feels the boys should follow a routine emphasized by the philosophy of the Academy so that it will become a pattern for their lives. Their basic day consists of the following:

Morning.--they awaken in a room of four boys, a room that has been prepared the evening before, reasonably clean, clothes laid out. Their tasks in the forty-five minutes until breakfast include washing, dressing, making beds and generally straightening the room and performing one job on the dormitory floor (vacuuming, sweeping, emptying garbage cans, etc.) before standing for a casual inspection. It is not as regimentated as it may sound; a balance between discipline and flexibility is maintained in regard to the dormitory. However, poor living conditions and sloppy quarters are not permitted under any circumstances, for these are contradictory to the objectives of Becket Academy. Even though the school seems isolated, it is very much in the public eye, and the students and staff must exist like human beings. At the same time, a false, synthetic appearance of cleanliness to the exclusion of people is not permitted. These are only boys, and this is, in effect, their home. Occasional carelessness in bed-making, a crooked wall poster, etc., while corrected when seen, is nevertheless treated with tolerance.

The dormitory has a decided masculine appearance. There are two faculty members to each of the three dormitory floors; usually one single and one married teacher. They share with other staff members the duty rotation, but they have the ultimate responsibility of the floor. Students are separated by grade and age--the first floor houses

eighth and ninth graders, the second floor has the sixth and seventh grade boys, and the fourth and fifth graders reside on the third floor. These grade levels occasionally overlap, depending upon enrollment and circumstances. For example, a small or immature eighth grader may be assigned to the second floor; a big fifth grade repeater may be moved one floor down, for social reasons. Each floor is autonomous, with monitors and elected officials; rotating work schedules; linen and cleaning supplies; comics, magazines and newspapers; recreational tables and games; a T.V. set; and a refrigerator.

After breakfast--the students gather at the chapel for the morning assembly. This portion of the day's program has been in existence since the second year of the school, and has taken place in the chapel since the building's completion in 1969. The program, created by Mr. Wolter for the purpose of starting the day on a collective note, begins with an all-denominational prayer and flag salute. A three-part morning report is given by three students, selected to be responsible for this portion of the program for three consecutive days. Each is responsible on a rotating basis for delivering a short contemporary report on news, weather and sports, the material to be culled from the morning newspaper, the school's weather station, and the radio, respectively. The program continues with a short talk by a faculty or student member on any topic of interest, and concludes with general daily announcements. Following the dismissal, the class day begins, consisting of two classes, a fifteen-minute break, and two more classes, finishing at noon for lunch.

Afternoon.--two more periods in the classroom complete the school portion of the day. There are six fifty-minute periods all together--five classroom recitation periods and one study period. Immediately after the final period and class clean-up, the students go to the locker room to change into athletic clothes. Provided by the school, these uniforms consist of T-shirt and shorts in the fall and spring months, and sweatsuit in the winter. All students meet on the playing fields (or the gymnasium on inclement weather days) for a mandating twenty-minute calisthenics and physical-training program, followed by a one and one-half hour intramural athletic period. The next hour is a mixed bag--interscholastic team athletic workout for those on school teams; activity and club period; free time to roam the campus, use of the library, or see teacher advisors; extra study hall for those in academic difficulties. At 5 P.M., all students are expected to be in their assigned study hall places, for the one-hour afternoon study time. Usually, the hour is segmented into thirty minutes for English studies, thirty minutes for math homework.

Evening.--following dinner, the students return to the study hall for evening study, which consists of twenty-five minute time blocks for the remaining three academic subjects. Reading is usually the final subject worked on, and students are permitted free reading time. After the first report card in October, students maintaining honors average and good disciplinary standing are assigned a classroom in which to study; ninth-graders in similar good standing are

allowed to study in their rooms in the dormitory. No time blocks of subject study need to be followed, and they may work independently. A disciplinary infraction during study hall (clowning around in assigned rooms instead of studying) or a falling off in academic standing are grounds for dismissal from this privilege. At the end of the evening study hall at 8 P.M., the students are free until lights out. However, detentions for disciplinary students is held at this time in the study hall area, and students having more homework to do may stay behind at this time. Free time may consist of the use of the athletic field or gym, freedom of the campus, library, chapel, pool, or dormitory. Canteen is distributed on each floor each evening, and when the headmaster is in residence, students are invited there. All students are to be in the dormitory by 9 P.M., and the half-hour before lights out is expected to be spent in preparation for bed and the next day.

Though formalized on paper, the routine becomes consistent and meaningful to the students who are expected to follow the daily schedule which is established for their health and safety. Still, a day to day ritual needs variety occasionally. Weekends and vacations are included in the program to ensure this.

Weekends.--Saturday morning is a regular school day, but all of the six daily fifty-minute classes are condensed into thirty minutes, so that all classes are completed by lunch time. These abbreviated classes give a good opportunity for short quizzes, letter writing, and extra help. At noon every Saturday (after the first two weeks of the school year), students are free to leave campus with their

parents until 5 P.M. Sunday. Parents are requested to contact the school office in advance so that an accurate list of students leaving and staying can be maintained. Parents may also remain in the area and visit with their sons, if they so wish, on either Saturday or Sunday. For the students remaining at the school, a wealth of activities is planned, which students can volunteer for. These activities include: use of gymnasium and athletic field for sports in season; swimming in the indoor pool; boy scouts; overnight camp-out; hikes off campus; woodworking, model building, arts and crafts; dormitory leisure time; movies; trips. Surprisingly, though most boys' homes are within reasonable driving distance of the school, the majority of the boys (never less than 80%) elect to remain on campus during the weekend. Perhaps the frequent vacations account for this.

Vacations.--because of the age levels being dealt with, the proximity to most homes, and the amount of staff duty time, Becket offers frequent vacations--approximately every three and one half weeks. At this time, the school literally closes for staff and students. There are seven of these vacation periods. Four of them are of major proportions, numbering anywhere from ten to eighteen days at Thanksgiving, Christmas, mid-winter and Easter. The remaining three vacations are four-day weekends, and occur in October, January and May. All students are expected to leave at this time. If there are circumstances preventing this (international travel, parents away), an attempt will be made to have the boy go home as a visitor and guest of another student and his family; failing this, a staff member will take care of the boy.

Effects of the Academic Program

The developing academic program had numerous effects on the major actors at Becket Academy. In the early years this program, in conjunction with a tremendous load of additional responsibilities, had a disheartening effect on the faculty, and those who left the Academy remained away from the boarding situation.⁵² However, due to the nature of the student body and very obvious needs, the program, particularly in regard to basic skills, caused students, many of whom were previous school failures, to progress at or near grade level on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills.⁵³ More important perhaps was that many students found in the Academy's faculty a group of teachers who were willing to work with them. Students who were often "little fish in big ponds" (public and parochial schools), now at least stood a chance of being a "fair sized fish in a small pond." Because the classes were small, the student's progress was usually obvious and quickly rewarded. The intense interest in the academic program by Mr. Wolter and Mr. Warren particularly was the spark which launched Mr. Wolter's efforts in the areas of construction which had an ultimate effect of a separate classroom-study building and a fine library.

Because school failure was so often associated with reading, development in this area was especially intensive.⁵⁴ This resulted

⁵²Employment Records, Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut, 1964-1970.

⁵³See Appendix II.

⁵⁴Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut. Interviews with Mr. Warren, and Mr. Gilbert Morneault, May 1971.

ultimately in an 8,000 volume library and an initial purchase of a Language-Arts Laboratory and reading equipment at a time when the school could ill afford these expenditures. Interest in the academic program was also the primary reason for having the school evaluated so often by so many different people. The final effect of these evaluations was early approval and accreditation which opened a variety of avenues for new students. This concern for academics, which was the main reason students were sent to the Academy, brought about the school's emphasis on progress reports, not so much for parents' information, but to keep the boy informed of his progress. These progress reports, when their emphasis is positive, are a source of individual motivation and excitement. Students who previously dreaded report cards because they never understood the system, now eagerly awaited the report cards they could understand.⁵⁵

The faculty's concern for academics brought a need to confer with the parents, particularly in regard to individual programs. To an extent, introspection in regard to programs initiated development in other areas, with a strong emphasis on achievement by students who often had difficulty achieving. There was a feeling among the faculty members that they owed the students, not only first class teaching, but the best approach possible in giving information. This attitude prompted the purchase of a large amount of audio-visual equipment, the programs for this equipment, and membership in Project Learn, which put

⁵⁵Becket Academy, East Haddam, Connecticut. Interviews with Mr. Christopher Stanton, Mr. Thomas Kelly, Mr. Reginald White, and Mr. Edward Peck, Spring, 1971.

just about all recognized audio-visual material within the school's grasp.

Intensive work on the academic program also influenced the extra-curricular program. The faculty truly felt that the students needed a break from their studies, so the athletic programs were expanded to give the boys an option to their chosen athletic activity. Variety was offered in the areas of activities which again resulted from academic emphasis.

Testing

Becket Academy has constantly sought to learn from standard tests, and yet not make these standardized tests the "end all" of education. Because the students were considered "average" and, in most cases, were "behind" their grade level in school,⁵⁶ a situation which usually results in a dislike for school, the Academy's goal was not to seek fantastic growth rates but to look for a harmonious overall rate of improvement from which school norms can be derived. It was felt that the ideal rate of growth would be for the students to increase just one year for each year of school, but more important, to do this in a relaxed atmosphere which the faculty and students could honestly say they enjoy.⁵⁷ The effect of this attitude has been that teachers do not teach for tests, nor do sensitive students panic

⁵⁶See Appendix II.

⁵⁷Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut. Interviews with Mr. Sidney DuPont, Mr. Curtis Hunter, Mr. Christopher Warren, Mr. Michael Nolan, Mr. James Reith, Spring, 1971.

at the thought of testing. The primary effect of the Academy's testing programs is that it reveals how little is known about testing, but from an overall point of view, glaring discrepancies in the programs become evident if the results are too far away from an increase in approximately one year for each year of school a boy spends at the Academy.

The Academy was able to sustain this growth rate in testing until 1968. Discouraging results on the Stanford Achievement Test in 1968-69 brought about an interesting response from the faculty. Rather than alter the programs, which the faculty enjoyed since the programs were the product of their own creation, it was decided to drop the Stanford Achievement Test and return to the Iowa Test of Basic Skills which made everyone feel better.⁵⁸ It is ironic that, at the end of the 1970-71 school year, a year of tremendous experimentation and creativity, the Iowa Test of Basic Skills results were poor.⁵⁹ The effect on the faculty was another irony, for rather than sacrifice their personal efforts in curriculum development, a suggestion was made to suspend all testing until the test companies catch up with the school.⁶⁰ These results had little effect on Secondary School Placement of the students.⁶¹

⁵⁸Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut. Interviews with Mr. Sidney DuPont and Mr. Christopher Warren, Spring, 1969.

⁵⁹See Appendix II, p. 221.

⁶⁰Faculty Meeting, Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut, May 26, 1971.

⁶¹Virtually all graduating students were placed in the school of their choice.

Extra-Curricular Activities

All students are expected to become active in the school's daily life. No one activity involves them more than organized athletics. There are no specialists in physical education who appear on campus to conduct this; it is the natural extension of the teachers' duty, and prevents the program from being too specialized and isolated from other experiences that ought to be related. Also, an outsider would not be as sensitive to the student's problems that athletics may help solve as would the man who is his dormitory master and/or classroom teacher. Intramurals and calisthenics are the cornerstone of the program, and all students are expected to participate in this except those who cannot for medical reasons (and these boys are given managerial, statistical or assistant positions in order to remain active and involved). Over and above this, the interscholastic sports program, which selects outstanding athletes to participate on school teams in competition with other schools, takes care of the specialized boys and sports. There are three major athletic teams in each "season" --fall: soccer, cross country, and six-man football; winter: basketball, hockey and wrestling; spring: baseball, track and field, and swimming. All boys in the seventh grade and above are expected to participate in one sport per season, even if that participation is only in a non-athletic capacity. Sixth graders and below can also become involved in junior varsity athletics.

This program is only as good as the active participation of the faculty, the availability of equipment, and extent of the facility.

During the first year all three were lacking, for everyone (students included) was too busy creating a school. But in the second year, things began looking up on all three counts. Particularly important was the addition of Angus Woolton to the staff. Mr. Woolton, a long-distance runner and track enthusiast, had a definite philosophy concerning athletics, and this was necessary in creating a definitive program. The following year, 1966-67 was even better. Several young men, all of them interested in athletics, joined the faculty, particularly Sidney DuPont, a nationally-ranked decathlon champion and college athlete. This was also the year that land clearance and leveling had given the school an athletic facility. This program, under Mr. DuPont's leadership, remained intact for four years, resulting in winning teams in most sports and a spirit of competition and loyalty among students. Again, a further development came about because of faculty additions. In the fall of 1970, three new staff members gave the program new direction and dimension: Reverend Charles Separk and Joseph LaFrance together fielded the school's first football team, which went on to an immensely successful 5-1 season; Mr. Peter Kenney resurrected track and field interest, particularly in cross-country, resulting in the daily appearance of scores of students jogging on the country road adjacent to the school. Through the efforts of Mr. Kenney, a sports club, with faculty and student officials, was formed; and Mr. LaFrance was instrumental in involving Becket in the Connecticut Independent School Athletic League in all sports.

While the sports program is quite organized, the activity program is not. The school attempted several times to inject a planned

activity program, with all students expected to participate in one activity of their choice. It was always a failure; the boys (and perhaps the teachers) just were not interested. On the other hand, unplanned and unstructured activities have frequently been successful due to the fact that these activities are student-originated and controlled. Boys may create a rocket club that, every Saturday, launches their creations from makeshift pads built on the athletic field or model building, or wood-carving groups may be formed because a teacher announces he will be so engaged, and invites the students on an informal basis to join him. An outdoor camping and mountain climbing group enjoys the same results. Only three activities have sustained themselves on a formal basis: the school newspaper, the boy scouts, and the student council.

Art, music and religion exist in a kind of limbo between an activity and an academic subject. Art was first introduced by a local art teacher who visited the school two afternoons a week during the first year. It was conducted as a formal course, but not continued into the second year. Mr. DuPont, who has instructed in nearly every subject, conducted a project-directed program for two years beginning in 1966. Mr. Gilbert Morneault took over the art groups when he joined the faculty in 1968, and created a proper balance between the formal classes and the free-wheeling projects. He has used the campus and the buildings for subjects. In 1970-71, one class would work each week on Saturday in the dormitory, creating murals, collages, and in general beautifying the dormitory while maintaining its masculine flavor. Music, like art, was handled by a local teacher for the first year, and

was quite formalized with a glee club being formed. Discontinued for the next two years, it was resurrected again in 1967 with the addition of Joseph Dattoli to the staff. Music classes were held weekly, and recitals and plays were staged during Mr. Dattoli's two-year stay. This past year, Harry Bosco conducted private music lessons, and recitals were held.

While athletics and activities provide a welcome retreat from the rigors of academic life, they also have the effect of engendering a spirit of healthy competition within the school on the part of faculty and students and creating a school spirit (inter-scholastic sports). Boys are attracted to athletic uniforms and will do almost anything to earn one. The faculty is also able to see the boys in a different light when on the athletic field. It is a source of satisfaction to teach a boy to block, or to develop his "running style" even though you cannot teach him decimals. Work on the athletic field gives the teachers and students a look at each other's non-academic or, more specifically, physical, competitive and cooperative side. Because of this, the athletic program constantly develops despite heavy loads.

It is much the same situation with other activities. Students and staff alike can show their musical, artistic, dramatic, "craftly" or collecting, self. Such activities allow the students and staff members to meet around a common interest and deal with it, not for a grade, but for fun.

Religion

Only within the past year has there been the emergence of religious faculty, with the addition of Rev. Charles Separk and Father Ivan Fergusen to the staff. Prior to this, lay staff members conducted religious classes to Catholic students only. However, a religious spirit has existed on campus since opening day 1964. The school, predominantly made up of Roman Catholic students and faculty, has offered Mass on campus every Sunday by visiting clergy. Prayers begin each day and each meal. All religions are welcome, and provisions are made to take non-Catholics to Sunday religious services. The building of the chapel in 1969, and the chaplain's quarters addition in 1971, have solidified and given a home to the religious program. Thus far, religious services in the chapel have included con-celebrated Masses, Christenings, weddings and a Bar Mitzvah.

The religious side of the Academy's program is the great common denominator. In Sacred Services, faculty, families, students and friends gather to share, in his own way, a mutual experience. While the student is worshipping, so is the faculty member, and the lesson from the preacher, if there is one, is heard by all.

Dining Hall

All these activities and events lead to hungry boys. The school dining room, well furnished and attractively decorated by the students and faculty, serves about 500 meals a day. All meals are hot in some fashion. The first school chef, a New York restaurateur who had a nearby lunch counter, was in his own way as important a factor in the

school's opening as any staff member. He remained at the school for three years, establishing a basic menu, working on the grounds, and enjoying an excellent rapport with the students. When he left to continue his New York food business enterprises, the school suffered for two years with inferior cooking arrangements, until a local woman was hired in 1969 to run the kitchen. Mr. Wolter realized that a good person who cared about the students was the best investment for the dining room. The students are served family style, an older student functioning as server. A waiter and mess boy, on duty for one week's time, cares for the table's needs. Scholarship students are on general clean-up duties. Nearly all the faculty attending to create a family atmosphere, with manners and conversation stressed, is the goal.

At every meal is the school nurse, dispensing the daily medicines. The school functioned without a nurse until 1967, using a nearby doctor for medical purposes. Miss Esther Bittigole then assumed the nursing responsibilities until her retirement in June 1971. Miss Bittigole resided on campus and was available for all emergencies. She enjoyed the respect of the boys and had a rapport with them. Her public relations work with the parents saved many a touchy health situation.

Dormitory and Faculty Residence

Other areas of the Academy's school life, such as the dormitory and faculty residence, have routines which contribute to the students and faculty overall sense of wellbeing. The casualness in regard to student and faculty life has engendered a relaxed attitude which makes

classroom life more pleasant and allows for guidance to be undertaken in a friendly, subtle manner. More guidance work and perhaps learning is accomplished outside the time spent in the classroom and school offices. The rather rigorous daily schedule⁶² has a good effect on the student's mind since it lets him know where he will be at any given time, and what he will be doing. When he seeks to alter this schedule (which he often does) he has a pretty good idea for what will be permissible; in short, he will not look for the bizarre.

However, while the effects of these programs are usually beneficial to the student, the staff members often find the schedule confining, and the lack of privacy⁶³ fostered by a feeling of "open-ness" has brought more than one faculty wife to the verge of tears, and more than one faculty member to the verge of quitting.⁶⁴

The close student-faculty contact brings out the strengths of the characters and personalities of both students and teachers, yet the reverse is also true, and it is not long before cracks in the veneer emerge. The only faculty member or wife who can withstand the situation are those who are willing to give themselves completely and to accept their own strengths and weaknesses and those of others willingly.

The other saving grace of the program is that vacations occur frequently, and while the students find that they can enjoy their homes

⁶²See Table 2, p. 35

⁶³Becket Academy, Inc., East Haddam, Connecticut. Interviews with Mr. and Mrs. V. Curtis Hunter, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Kenney, and Mr. and Mrs. Robert Morahan, April, 1971.

⁶⁴Ibid.

more, the faculty also develops a certain closeness with each other and finds enough free time to pursue their various interests and hobbies.⁶⁵

Guidance Director and Dean of Discipline

The final area of this study on program will be treated together, for the school feels that the positions of Guidance Director and Dean of Discipline are natural extensions of each other.

The school has two teachers serving as Guidance Director and Dean of Discipline. These men function as a guide to student living and are available each day to work with boys having problems of adjustment. In reality, all staff members are guidance directors, and more guidance is done in informal settings than in formal ones. Since each staff member is hired with this personality trait in mind, guidance becomes another of his general duty responsibilities.

The Dean of Discipline, on the other hand, deals with infractions of the school rules. Confidential records and accountings are kept to determine if similar offenses are committed by the same boy. For specialized cases, the school has the services of Jay Ashe, a psychiatric social-worker, who visits the school twice each week to talk with the boys under his care and to consult with the faculty members. The psychological clinic at nearby Wesleyan University is also available to the Academy for boys requiring special testing.

Summary

This chapter reiterated the type of student and teacher that is most affected, or most helped, by Becket Academy. The academic

⁶⁵Ibid.

program from its humble and somewhat naive beginnings was analyzed as it developed into the more sophisticated and experimental curriculum employed during the 1970-1971 school year. The Academy's experience with testing on the Iowa Basic Skills test, the Stanford Achievement test, and the Otis I.Q. test was described, and the Academy's feelings on progress reports, parents conferences, and the daily academic and extra-curricular programs was emphasized. All aspects of the school life--classroom, dormitory, dining hall, parents, students and teachers--are interrelated and interdependent so that the real benefit of the Becket program can only be seen in terms of the total Becket experience. The development of the school's academic and athletic philosophy, attitude toward music, art and religious instruction, and guidance discipline was also outlined.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

The objectives of this study were to determine the major actors and incidents which have affected the programs and physical and financial development of Becket Academy from its founding in 1964 through the school year 1970-1971, as well as to determine the effects these actors, incidents, developments and programs had upon each other. These objectives were achieved by describing the Academy in detail as it existed in the 1970-1971 school year and by reviewing separately the factors of philosophy, location, corporate structure, processes of evaluation and accreditation, from the school's beginning in 1964 until the 1970-1971 school year. The development and growth of the school's student body, staff, finances, construction and internal organization were also studied and described from 1964 to 1971, including the total Becket Academy program, particularly in the areas of curriculum, testing, student living and extra-curricular activities.

Summary

Procedure

The study was conducted after significant pieces of information and data were drawn from the files of Becket Academy, the school's legal and financial counsels, and personal letters and reports from various people and agencies involved in the Academy's growth. Where necessary, interviews were conducted and in particular applications and permanent records of over 470 students and 60 professional and

non-professional staff were screened and analyzed in a variety of areas. Detailed financial statements and studies of formal testing were compiled and organized for comparison. These preliminary studies were then organized into a series of seven chapters in order to achieve the objectives of the study. Certain terms were defined, assumptions and limitations were described, the study was introduced and its significance and organization stated.

The objectives of the study were met by first relating Becket Academy as it existed during the 1970-1971 school year, showing the advantages of its location, its high status in regard to accreditation, approval and listings, plus the internal and external organizations of the school. The land, buildings and equipment were described, and the philosophy of the Academy, student finances, physical development in 1970-1971 were related. The program, particularly in regard to academics, testing, guidance, summer programs and extra-curricular activities, was explained. Data on the students and faculty, admissions and employment practices, salary and staff benefits and duties were stated and, where necessary, tables shown. Wherever possible, figures and charts were used to foster and clarify understanding of the material. The question, "how Becket Academy achieved the successful position it enjoyed in 1970-1971," was left to be answered in subsequent sections of the study.

The reader, after studying the 1970-1971 school year, would realize that many events, processes and variables had to be co-ordinated to bring about the Academy's success. The study of the school's

objectives showed the effects that the beliefs and ideals of the headmaster-founder had upon the development of the school. The section on objectives included a study of personal ideals and goals for the faculty and the students, and the emphasis placed upon communications between the faculty, students and parents. The philosophy of education evolved from the feelings and experiences of Mr. Wolter and included essentially the ingredients of hard work, self-discipline, dedication, a sense of duty, loyalty and purpose, and a realization of the part religion plays in life. It was demonstrated how this philosophy "went a long way" in helping or hindering the faculty, families and students to endure considerable hardships and anguish as they contributed to the building of Becket Academy. The reader will find that the qualities emphasized in the Academy's educational objectives are also a way of life.

In describing the location of Becket Academy, the author presented in considerable detail the trials of what apparently should be a simple task--finding a location for a school. At one point in particular, exemplified by the experience in Lyme, Connecticut, a low point was reached, but overcoming this obstacle brought about greater benefits.

The Academy's various corporate structures, their development, advantages and disadvantages were related to illustrate the tremendous amount of legal complications and individual maneuverings which occur in a major endeavor.

The process of evaluation, approval, and accreditation explains to the reader that reliance and faith in the advice of "key people" will

enable a school to go through lengthy processes rapidly, providing the staff and students are willing to extend themselves. The reader should be aware that Becket Academy and John Wolter missed very few opportunities when they presented themselves and that the Academy, through an entire series of evaluations, was willing to expose the inner fibers of the school in order to benefit from the advice of fellow educators. In almost every instance, the Academy acted on the advice it received.

The reader should realize that competing and controversial forces are constantly at work, and complications are commonplace, in an undertaking of such a scope as founding a school. However, anyone beginning a new venture must know the path to success is one which has many intricate processes and personalities operating together in an attempt to bring seemingly chaotic forces and phenomenon into a unified program.

The overall development and growth of the Academy was broken down into several areas: faculty and student development were first explained together to show their interrelation and then explained separately to show their individual and corrective characteristics in various areas. A number of tables were used to illustrate the factors of geographic distribution, family background, race, religion, student support, and procurement of the student body. The physical development naturally followed. Student and staff development, the construction and expansion which occurred from 1964 to 1970 was described in detail, along with the methods used in accomplishing the physical development, financing this development, and the various benefits derived from these methods.

The internal organization of the school was described to enable the reader to see how flexibility in structure was necessary for rapid expansion. At this point the reader becomes more acutely aware of the frustrations, not only those of a financial or organizational nature, but the frustrations involving persons, both students and faculty, who were not able to respond to the challenge and conditions at the Academy and therefore left. One should appreciate the qualities of the people who, despite severe criticism, managed to remain at the school and bring about its very existence today. Here was emphasized the fact that different people, old or young, respond in various ways to the same situation. In the case of Becket Academy, what inspired some, discouraged others.

The effect of the school's objectives, physical and academic growth on the major actors at the Academy was taken into consideration and described throughout this study, but the overall effect of the Becket Program can only be answered by each participating individual in his own heart and mind. For some faculty members it was a realization that they did not belong in education. For others, it was a revelation that while they could be teachers they could not tolerate the constant contact with the students and other faculty members. Several discovered that this could be their life's work.

The effect of the program on the students can hardly be fully understood. The experience of the school's program has affected the lives of some students greatly, who literally feel that Becket is

their home.¹ Other students are never heard from after they leave. Mr. Wolter and the faculty members believe that it is too early to evaluate the real effect the school has had on the students. The program at Becket Academy aims to make a boy aware of his "God given potential" and to help him develop and express it in his life's work. It is too early as yet to determine just how successful the school has been in realizing its aim, but Mr. Wolter and the faculty have kept track of the graduating student body, and it is their plan to study these boys' attitudes toward their Becket Experience ten years after graduation. In this way, the benefits of mature reflection and equal communication might be realized.

Perhaps the greatest and most significant effect of the Academy's program on those who stayed with it during its struggling years is a gratifying sense of accomplishment and the full realization that they possess the inner fibre to live through difficult times. In the words of the headmaster, "We, students and faculty alike, face the future with a smile."

Implications

This study was made with the knowledge that Becket Academy is but one school and that the study, while covering only a short period of time, still spoke of the past. Socio-economic conditions, from the period, 1964-1971, were certainly different from those of today. The

¹Numerous students return to the Academy to present themselves to the headmaster before or after major decisions of college, work, military service, marriage, or family problems.

exact difference can only be determined after careful study with specifics in mind.

The general implications that can be drawn from this study for the establishment of a new school are as follows:

1. Location is important from the point of view of accessibility and nearness to large population centers in order to attract students.
2. A non-profit corporate status is important so that the school may enjoy the benefits of a tax-exempt status, including donations (deductible); be eligible for state and federal programs and for membership in the various independent school organizations; and receive the respect of the professors.
3. Accreditation and approval are necessary, else foreign students and wards of the state will not be eligible for attendance, and secondary schools may choose not to accept school credits or recommend students to the school for admissions.
4. A flexible organizational structure assures the school's ability to adjust to the changing needs created by the faculty, students, program and unanticipated events.
5. Considerable financing is advisable, for the more poorly financed the school is, the more the faculty and students must sacrifice and work to provide the essentials, such as adequate buildings, equipment, etc.
6. A philosophy with the elements of determination, enthusiasm, and self-discipline is essential for overcoming the frustration

encountered daily from individuals and events.

7. Communication between the school and parents must be as wide as possible so that the parents can see and understand the program and its benefits despite a lack of "trimmings" such as elaborate buildings, equipment and leisure time activities.

8. Student charges should be sufficient to enable the school to operate with a balanced budget, preferably with a surplus.

9. State funding of students is available and considerable, especially if the school truly has an open admission policy.

10. Correct and good advice from legal, accounting and professional experts is essential, specifically in regard to education; especially the school should seek only the advice of professionals of highest calibre and then follow their advice.

11. Good public relations and school image are important, particularly within the community.

12. Financial credit of the school must be above reproach to receive "extended financial credit" from contractors, purveyors of service, suppliers, etc.

13. A variety of academic and extra-curricular programs is important to meet the needs and interest of individual differences of the students.

14. Consideration for faculty families, whenever a schedule permits, is vital for assuring domestic tranquility and a stable staff.

15. Student body should be diverse in race, religion, nationality and socio-economic background, for it increased student enrollment possibilities.

16. Working and living under stressful conditions is not necessarily detrimental; faculty and students can thrive and develop creative skills by meeting the challenges of a rugged atmosphere.

17. A great deal of paraphernalia and subject matter can be disregarded during the early stages of the school's development.

18. Spartan conditions, rigorous work activity and academic programs impress parents and state social workers.

19. Expansion of the school's program and increased use of its facilities by operations such as Becket Adventures and Summer School can give financial, professional, and enrollment benefits.

Some specific conclusions in the case of Becket Academy are:

1. In the early years, rigorous leadership and determination by the headmaster was important;

2. The support of Christopher Warren, his family, and the headmaster's family provided enough impetus to continue operation despite the problems encountered in the vital areas of faculty and student cooperation and enthusiasm.

3. Individuals brought to Becket Academy knowledge and skills they were unaware of; young teachers found they could write curriculum, swing a hammer, and coach baseball even though they had not previously done these things.

4. Some individuals functioned at optimum when given complete authority, i.e. Christopher Warren and Sidney DuPont with the Summer Programs. These experiences enabled them to conduct the Academy in the headmaster's absence.

5. It is not advantageous to rely upon any one source of financing; rather, banks, businesses, suppliers, and person resources (school's own labor and brain-power) should be molded together as a resource bank.

6. At times, gambles are necessary in order to maintain movement or growth, as in the decision to proceed with building despite mortgage refusals.

7. The parents and friends of Becket Academy responded to the plea for donations.

8. Flexibility of the faculty and students to the program, and the program to the students and faculty developed a perception to individual needs and the ability to adjust to these needs and to changing situations.

The founding of Becket Academy was literally an experiment in "educational pioneering." There is no way to mold the major actors to a specific program, or to expect that they will provide consistently rational approaches to either the program or to the events which will occur in the founding and development of an independent, alternative boarding school. One simply cannot know the future, nor can one know the true nature of any human being and how he will react to various situations, either individually or in a group. The only possible solution to the problems that will arise lies in the willingness to alter programs and situations wherever possible to the needs and schedules of the persons involved, be they students, faculty or their families.

Any person connected with a new school must have a high tolerance for frustration and possess emotional maturity and stability.

Stamina and sound physical health are also necessary characteristics, as well as a willingness to "have fun whenever the occasion arises," and to laugh often at oneself. Anyone involved in the founding of a school should expect to give infinitely more than he can possibly receive. In short, he must love himself, his fellow workers, and especially the children with whom he will live and work.

The headmaster, in particular, must embody these qualities, as well as another quality that almost defies description. Some people call it "guts," others call it "heart." But if you possess this intangible, you will know it and so will those about you, be they students, faculty, bankers, evaluators or parents.

APPENDIX I

BECKET ACADEMY FINANCES

BECKET ACADEMY, INC., COMPARATIVE INCOME STATEMENT
PER TAX RETURNS

	64-65	65-66	66-67	67-68
Gross income	\$85,291	\$186,977	\$272,699	\$373,038
Cost of operations (schedule)	<u>50,829</u>	<u>114,546</u>	<u>166,333</u>	<u>230,770</u>
Gross profit	\$34,462	\$ 72,431	\$106,366	\$142,268
Expenses:				
Headmaster's salary ^a	\$ 9,000	\$ 17,000	\$ 18,042	\$ 36,346
Repairs	3,157	7,220	12,076	--- ^b
Rents	140	395	3,149	3,267
Taxes	2,307	8,432	6,289	12,211
Interest	4,310	8,527	17,304	19,349
Contributions	---	18	201	206
Amortization	72	72	72	72
Depreciation	4,790	10,136	18,999	27,781
Advertising	5,794	7,728	7,787	7,318
Other expenses	<u>486</u>	<u>5,582</u>	<u>11,851</u>	<u>11,561</u>
Total expenses	\$30,056	\$ 65,110	\$ 95,770	\$118,111
Taxable income	\$ 4,406	\$ 7,321	\$ 10,596	\$ 24,157

^aHeadmaster's salary was not paid entirely in cash. The headmaster received some of this compensation in the form of notes payable to him.

^bIncluded in cost of operations.

BECKET ACADEMY, INC., COMPARATIVE COST OF
OPERATIONS SCHEDULE

	64-65	65-66	66-67	67-68
Salaries and wages	\$15,473	\$ 36,119	\$ 62,215	\$101,499
Food and kitchen	12,637	21,647	21,207	29,415
Student expenses	3,976	9,467	20,101	30,060
Instructional supplies	2,696	6,321	4,618	1,007
Books	2,835	--- ^a	5,108	6,326
Fuel	3,576	5,750	5,999	--- ^b
Miscellaneous	---	611	673	1,451
Electricity	1,331	2,666	3,652	{ 20,130
Telephone	1,313	1,603	2,893	{
Office expense	909	3,525	2,637	1,086
Insurance	2,057	2,664	1,722	5,043
Grounds	225	7,297	7,663	1,302
Dorm supplies	---	2,964	5,547	14,992
Recreation	---	3,125	1,041	--- ^c
Athletics	455	3,646	2,351	2,173
Maintenance	1,998	3,249	3,284	9,249
Transportation	1,348	3,887	3,077	4,072
Placement service	---	---	1,895	2,965
Summer school	---	---	10,650	---
Total cost of operations	\$50,829	\$114,546	\$166,333	\$230,770

^aIncluded in instructional supplies.

^bIncluded in telephone and electricity.

^cIncluded in athletics.

BECKET ACADEMY - COMPARATIVE BALANCE SHEETS

	6/30/69	6/30/70	6/30/71
<u>Assets</u>			
Cash	\$ 34	\$ 5,247	\$ 6,471
Accounts receivables-			
Tuition	8,793	16,314	24,878
Clubs	---	596	2,783
Employees	---	784	---
River Road Corporation	5,213	---	---
Becket School	47,853	---	---
Insurance claim	---	10,000	5,000
Aid	---	---	---
Donated securities	1,401	---	---
Prepaid interest	---	335	---
Deferred charges	---	4,550	2,230
Fixed assets	29,656	39,857	37,857
Goodwill	---	57,800	57,800
	<u>---</u>	<u>---</u>	<u>---</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$92,950</u>	<u>\$135,483</u>	<u>\$137,019</u>
<u>Liabilities</u>			
Accounts payable	\$32,323	\$ 26,071	\$ 19,839
Taxes payable	5,034	6,160	7,714
Accrued payroll	---	---	---
Notes payable--equipment	2,831	4,301	1,410
Notes payable--			
River Road Corporation	---	10,201	---
Due Wolters	17,298	---	---
Notes payable--bank	---	20,000	11,000
Becket School	---	136	9,751
Deferred tuition income	9,045	24,833	27,200
State of Connecticut	---	---	2,942
	<u>---</u>	<u>---</u>	<u>---</u>
Total Liabilities	\$66,531	\$ 91,702	\$ 79,856
Fund Balance	<u>\$26,419</u>	<u>\$ 43,781</u>	<u>\$ 57,163</u>

BECKET ACADEMY - COMPARATIVE EXPENSES AND INCOME

Expenses	Budget 1968-69	f/y/e 6/30/69	Budget 1969-70	f/y/e 6/30/70	Budget 1970-71	f/y/e 6/30/71
Salaries & wages	\$138,000	\$147,548	\$133,000	\$130,362	\$148,000	\$140,750
Books, Av. & supplies	5,000	5,523	1,500	3,112	2,000	1,986
Food	30,000	29,120	25,000	27,835	30,000	30,398
Dormitory	1,500	2,090	500	2,338	1,500	2,525
Infirmary	1,000	565	500	730	750	206
Athletics	2,500	2,025	---	279	3,000	8,534
Student expense & supplies	---	33,097	---	27,514	30,000	38,978
Summer programs	---	---	---	1	---	---
Advertising	8,500	8,122	7,500	6,454	6,500	5,084
Public relations	4,000	4,895	2,500	4,095	4,000	2,904
Placement services	2,500	2,509	1,500	600	1,000	2,205
Insurance	6,000	5,696	5,800	3,730	5,800	9,524
Office expense	3,000	3,627	3,500	2,780	3,000	3,114
Legal & professional	3,000	1,889	3,000	5,315	4,000	2,550
Interest	500	---	---	338	500	1,224
Dues & subscriptions	500	225	200	865	900	924
Transportation	6,000	2,756	3,000	1,916	4,000	6,738
Utilities	20,000	18,869	17,500	18,012	18,000	23,362
Maintenance-buildings	9,000	18,902	5,000	9,766	6,200	14,949
Maintenance-grounds	4,500	4,295	3,000	2,867	3,000	1,491
Equipment	2,500	4,608	2,000	700	1,000	1,908
Rent	70,000	70,000	72,500	75,679	78,000	77,688
New construction	10,000	12,047	7,000	13,364	10,000	934
Chapel construction	---	21,901	5,000	4,369	1,000	1,395
Chapel drive	---	88	1,000	10	---	---
Total Expenses	\$328,000	\$400,397	\$300,500	\$343,031	\$362,150	\$379,371

BECKET ACADEMY - COMPARATIVE EXPENSES AND INCOME--Continued

Income						
Tuition fees	\$316,000	\$362,142	\$290,000	\$311,608	\$320,650	\$330,103
Summer programs	---	9,932	---	7,356	10,000	10,952
Expense account	5,000	27,430	---	31,216	33,000	43,000
Fund drive	---	---	---	9,334	10,000	7,838
Chapel drive	---	26,827	---	531	---	695
Discounts-commissions	---	486	---	682	---	165
Total income	\$321,000	\$426,817	\$290,000	\$360,727	\$373,650	\$392,753

BECKET SCHOOL DEBT STRUCTURE

Balance - March 1, 1970

1st Mortgages

Norwich Savings Society	\$107,000
Chester Savings Bank on the Balleck property	11,000
Dime Savings Bank on the Wolter property	<u>19,000</u>
Total of 1st Mortgages	\$137,000

Unsecured Debt

9% Debentures	\$ 62,000
Hanrahan Note	<u>100,000</u>
Total Unsecured Debt	\$162,000
	<hr/>
Total Debt	\$299,000

APPENDIX II

RESULTS OF STUDENTS' TEST SCORES

IA. IOWA TEST OF BASIC SKILLS, 1964-65

1. Grade Equivalent Comparisons

Grade	Number of Students		Students not fully Tested		Vocabulary		Reading		Language		Work Study Skills		Arithmetic		Composite	
					Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
6	5	8	1	1	5.5	6.5	5.4	6.1	4.6	6.6	5.7	6.9	5.8	6.4	5.5	5.8
7	10	13	-	-	7.8	7.8	7.2	7.4	6.7	7.5	6.5	7.5	6.8	7.3	6.9	7.5
8	17	18	-	2	8.0	8.8	7.2	8.8	7.2	8.3	7.3	8.8	7.6	8.3	7.5	8.6

2. Rate of Growth

(Includes Only Students Taking Both Tests)

Grade	Number of Students		Students not fully Tested		Vocabulary		Reading		Language		Work Study Skills		Arithmetic		Composite	
					Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
6	5		-		+0.6		+0.3		+2.1		+1.1		+0.3		+0.8	
7	10		-		-0.1		+0.3		-0.2		+1.0		+0.5		+0.6	
8	16		-		+0.5		+1.4		+1.0		+1.5		+1.0		+1.2	

1B. OTIS QUICK SCORING MENTAL ABILITY TESTS, 1964-651. I.Q. Results (School)

Grade	Number of Students	I.Q.
5	3	99
6	7	98
7	13	96
8	10	109

School I.Q. 101

2. I.Q. Results (Students Included in 1A2)

Grade	Number of Students	I.Q.
6	5	93
7	10	97
8	9	107

Average I.Q. 99

2A. IOWA TEST OF BASIC SKILLS, 1965-66

Grade Equivalent Comparisons

(Only Autumn Battery Given)

Grade	Number of Students	Students Not fully Tested	Vocabulary	Reading	Language	Work Study Skills	Arithmetic	Composite
4	3	1	4.7	3.1	3.4	3.3	3.6	3.7
5	6	2	6.3	4.3	5.0	4.7	4.4	4.9
6	13	1	5.6	4.9	4.8	5.2	5.1	5.1
7	19	1	7.2	6.5	6.4	6.4	6.9	6.7
8	27	.1	7.4	7.0	6.0	7.1	6.9	7.1

3A. IOWA TEST OF BASIC SKILLS, 1966-67

1. Grade Equivalent Comparisons

a. Students tested and compared

September, 1965 - May, 1967

Grade	Number of Students	Vocabulary		Reading		Language		Arithmetic		Composite	
		Sept 1965	May 1967	Sept 1965	May 1967	Sept 1965	May 1967	Sept 1965	May 1967	Sept 1965	May 1967
4	2	4.6	5.0	3.3	4.4	3.4	5.4	3.8	4.9	3.7	5.0
5	1	4.7	6.7	2.7	7.3	3.5	8.8	3.3	7.8	3.5	7.5
6	6	4.9	7.1	4.6	6.5	4.5	7.1	4.7	7.0	4.6	7.0
7	5	6.7	8.4	5.8	8.3	6.5	7.6	5.5	8.4	5.8	8.2
8	16	7.5	9.3	6.7	8.7	6.6	8.3	6.8	9.7	6.7	8.8

b. Students tested and compared

September 1966 - May 1967

Grade	Number of Students	Vocabulary		Reading		Language		Arithmetic		Composite	
		Sept 1966	May 1967	Sept 1966	May 1967	Sept 1966	May 1967	Sept 1966	May 1967	Sept 1966	May 1967
4	5	4.0	5.3	3.7	4.5	4.0	4.6	4.0	4.1	3.9	4.7
5	7	5.3	5.9	4.7	5.8	5.2	6.2	5.2	5.9	5.1	6.0
6	8	5.5	7.2	5.8	6.2	6.7	7.8	6.1	7.0	6.0	7.0
7	11	7.4	8.4	6.6	7.7	6.5	7.5	6.8	7.7	6.8	7.9
8	13	9.4	9.4	8.2	9.0	7.7	8.4	7.7	8.3	8.3	8.8

3B. OTIS QUICK SCORING MENTAL ABILITY TESTS, 1966-67I.Q. Results (School)

Grade	Number of Students	I.Q.
4	9	104
5	10	108
7	25	99

School I.Q. 104

4A. IOWA TEST OF BASIC SKILLS, 1967-68

1. Grade Equivalent Comparisons

Grade	Number of Students		Students Not Fully Tested		Vocabulary		Reading		Language		Arithmetic		Composite	
	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
4	6	8	-	-	4.7	5.7	3.9	5.3	4.4	5.5	4.1	5.0	4.2	5.4
5	12	15	1	-	5.5	6.2	4.6	5.3	5.4	6.3	4.4	5.9	4.9	6.1
6	21	21	-	-	6.1	8.0	6.1	7.6	6.2	8.1	5.9	7.0	6.1	7.7
7	46	49	1	-	7.7	8.1	7.1	7.6	7.3	8.0	6.9	7.8	7.3	8.0
8	37	38	2	1	8.3	9.3	7.6	8.8	7.7	8.3	7.8	8.6	7.6	8.8

4A. IOWA TESTS OF BASIC SKILLS, 1967-68--Continued

2. Rate of Growth (includes only students taking both tests)

Grade	Number of Students	Students Not fully Tested	Vocabulary	Reading	Language	Arithmetic	Composite
4	6	-	0.9	1.1	1.2	0.9	1.0
5	10	-	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.6
6	17	-	1.4	1.0	1.7	1.0	1.3
7	40	1	0.3	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.8
8	33	3	0.9	1.4	0.4	1.0	1.1

Rate of Growth + 1.0

4B. OTIS QUICK SCORING MENTAL ABILITY TESTS, 1967-681. I.Q. Results (School)

Grade	Number of Students	I.Q.
5	12	103
6	11	104
7	27	99
8	13	99

School I.Q. 101

2. I.Q. Results (Students included in 4A2)

Grade	Number of Students	I.Q.
5	6	104
6	10	103
7	24	101
8	10	97

Average I.Q. 101

5A. STAMFORD ACHIEVEMENT TESTS, 1968-69, 1969-701. Comparison of 6 - 7 Grades

a. Grade Equivalent Comparisons

Date Taken	Grade	Number of Students	Paragraph Meaning	Spelling	Language	Arithmetic Computation	Arithmetic Concepts	Arithmetic Application	Social Studies	Science	Battery Median
10-7-68	6	11	5.1	4.4	4.9	4.4	5.4	4.7	4.8	4.3	4.7
10-6-69	7	11	6.4	5.1	5.3	4.7	5.8	5.4	5.3	6.1	5.5

b. Rate of Growth

Paragraph Meaning	Spelling	Language	Arithmetic Computation	Arithmetic Concepts	Arithmetic Application	Social Studies	Science	Battery Median
+1.3	+0.7	+0.4	+0.3	+0.4	+0.7	+0.5	+1.8	+0.8

2. Comparison of 7 - 8 Grades

a. Grade equivalent comparisons

Date Taken	Grade	Number of Students	Paragraph Meaning	Spelling	Language	Arithmetic Computation	Arithmetic Concepts	Arithmetic Application	Social Studies	Science	Battery Median
10-7-68	7	24	7.1	6.1	6.5	5.4	6.8	6.9	7.3	7.1	6.7
10-6-69	8	24	7.4	6.9	6.8	6.0	7.1	7.1	8.1	7.4	7.1

b. Rate of growth

Paragraph Meaning	Spelling	Language	Arithmetic Computation	Arithmetic Concepts	Arithmetic Application	Social Studies	Science	Battery Median
+0.3	+0.8	+0.5	+0.6	+0.3	+0.2	+0.8	+0.3	+0.4

5B. OTIS QUICK SCORING MENTAL ABILITY TESTS, 1968-691. I.Q. Results

Grade	Number of Students	I.Q.
5	13	99
6	13	109
7	39	103
8	53	103

School I.Q. 104

6A. IOWA TEST OF BASIC SKILLS, 1970-711. Grade Equivalent Comparisons

Grade	Number of Students		Students Not Fully Tested		Vocabulary	Reading	Language	Arithmetic	Composite			
	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring		
4	3	4	-	-	3.2	3.9	2.1	2.1	3.3	2.4	2.8	3.9
5	10	12	-	-	5.2	5.3	4.5	4.6	4.5	4.5	4.8	5.0
6	15	14	3	1	4.4	5.4	4.8	5.2	5.4	5.2	4.9	5.2
7	31	22	1	-	6.6	8.1	6.5	7.3	6.4	7.1	6.6	7.5
8	43	45	3	3	8.2	8.1	7.6	8.2	7.4	7.8	7.7	8.1
9	14	13	-	-	9.7	9.5	8.7	9.1	8.1	8.5	8.7	8.9

2. Rate of Growth

(Includes only students taking both tests)

Grade	Number of Students	Students Not Fully Tested	Vocabulary	Reading	Language	Arithmetic	Composite
4	3	-	+ 0.4	+ 1.3	+ 2.0	+ 0.8	+ 1.2
5	8	-	+ 0.5	+ 0.1	+ 0.1	+ 0.2	+ 1.0
6	8	-	+ 0.9	+ 0.4	+ 0.6	+ 0.4	+ 0.5
7	22	-	+ 0.9	+ 0.8	+ 0.7	+ 0.7	+ 0.7
8	42	-	+ 0.3	+ 0.1	+ 0.7	+ 0.5	+ 0.4
9	13	-	- 0.3	+ 0.3	+ 0.5	+ 0.5	+ 0.2

Rate of Growth + 0.7

6B. OTIS QUICK SCORING MENTAL ABILITY TESTS1. I.Q. Results (School)

Grade	Number of Students	I.Q.
4	2	103
5	6	91
6	15	95
7	26	98
8	36	98
9	11	101

School I.Q. 98

2. I.Q. Results (Includes students in 6A2)

Grade	Number of Students	I.Q.
4	2	103
5	4	90
6	7	91
7	21	97
8	34	98
9	11	101

Average I.Q. 97

APPENDIX III

CODE OF ETHICS

BECKET ACADEMY

CODE OF ETHICS

The most effective measure of this Code of Ethics is the attitude of each student toward himself. Each one of us should be aware of our many responsibilities. Our success depends upon fulfilling them to the best of our ability.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES TO GOD:

- * OBEY GOD'S LAWS by obeying the Golden Rule and the Ten Commandments.
- * ALWAYS BE FAITHFUL and reverent to GOD.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES TO SCHOOL AND DORMITORY:

- * PAY FULL ATTENTION to and cooperate fully with instructors so that you can grasp all opportunities which they make possible for you.
- * BE PROUD of the fact that you are from Becket Academy.
- * FOLLOW the school pledge.
- * ACCEPT LEADERSHIP and help your fellow student to work and play as a team.
- * IF A BOY is about to, or HAS BROUGHT DISHONOR, to his Dormitory or school, it is your responsibility to all others, to see to it that one of the adults is brought in to help.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES TO OTHERS:

- * PRACTICE and use ETIQUETTE to show people you have concern for them.
- * Have RESPECT for your elders, teachers, or anybody in authority.
- * REMEMBER that other PEOPLE have FEELINGS too, try to build them up instead of tearing them down.
- * TREAT other people's PROPERTIES as if they were your own.
- * BORROW only when you can REPAY.
- * GRUDGE HOLDERS HATE THEMSELVES, BULLIES ARE COWARDS. Avoid being either, but be a good example.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES TO YOURSELF:

- * KEEP NEAT and well groomed to make the best impression possible.
- * TRY TO CONTROL YOUR EMOTIONS.
- * WORK AT YOUR BEST so that you can form good work habits and be proud of the things you have done.
- * ACCEPT CORRECTION WITH THANKS because it is given to help you be the best possible person.

YOUR CONSTANT RESPONSIBILITIES:

- * Always try to BE CHEERFUL, HELPFUL, KIND and COURTEOUS.
- * Remember that GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP is important throughout life.
- * SET HIGH, but realistic GOALS, then work diligently until you reach them.
- * SWEARING and CHEATING just SHOW your WEAKNESS, avoid them.
- * AVOID DISCUSSING Dormitory, Counselor or school PROBLEMS outside Becket Academy.
- * TRUSTWORTHINESS IS FUNDAMENTAL TO SUCCESS.

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